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OF

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY

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# *MEMOIRS*

OF

# MADAME DE BARNEVELDT.

EVERY body muſt know that the women in Italy are in a ſtate of what may be called *civil* captivity captives to the wills, or rather caprices of their huſbands. Roſino's diſpoſition was unlike that of Italians in general—his ſoul, unincumbered by ſuſpicion, could afford no ſhelter to jealouſy, for where one of theſe troubleſome vices grow, the other will flouriſh: yet ſomething was owing to the cuſtom of his country, and I ſubmitted to reſtraint without murmuring; which condeſcenſion may a little be wondered at, when it is conſidered that the mountain deer does

not enjoy its liberty more than I had done in the foreſt of Ardennes, or in my wilder career through the inhabited world: but why was it that I felt no pain in ſubmitting to the eſtabliſhed modes that clipped the wings of my freedom? It was becauſe I adored my huſband, and found the little ſacrifice of my inclinations abundantly overbalanced in his undivided affections, and the indulgent goodneſs which his father and mother took pleaſure in ſhewing me; and, for my part, I never thought I had done enough in making them returns of gratitude.

It was the ſtudy of this excellent family to procure for me every amuſement conſiſtent with the ſtraight laws by which they were governed. Amongſt our other family excurſions we frequently viſited ſome of our relations who lived at a ſhort diſtance from Florence, particularly at the country ſeat of Signor Martini Hiſallie, a relation, where we often found entertaining, if not always ſenſible, parties of men and women.

This Signor was a rich man, one of thoſe characters who poſſeſs a great deal of *amour proper*,

*proper*, but whoſe judgement is not worth a farthing: what he would palm as current intelligence upon others, conſiſted in a knack of memory which enabled him to paſs decided and a tolerable good critique, at ſecond-hand, on men and books—that ſhare of wiſdom, which excluſively belonged to himſelf, directed him only to put no truth in his own opinion on abſtruſe ſubjects, but to make decent collections from thoſe who let there ſentiments fall to the ground, without caring what dunce picks them up; for where there is no ſcarcity of ideas, the old are always ſo well ſupplied by new ones, that what enriches the thief, does not impoveriſh the owner.

Our Signor diligently poſſeſſed himſelf of the beſt literary gems chance threw in his way, content to make them the foundation of that edifice he wiſhed to raiſe to his own reputation, on the tip top of which he hoped to exhibit his diminutive perſon as a *beau d'eſprit* of the firſt magnitude. It was quite enough for him to ſpeak of books without reading them, or even trying to be at the trouble of underſtanding thoſe he did read.

How convenient to be a great man on ſuch *little* terms: I really believe there are many ſuch in the world—many who never think for themſelves; but who, like our ſimpleton, poſſeſſed of riches and vanity, ſnatches ſomething from every body, to ſupport the whim of paſſing for what he is not—a man of ſenſe, and a literati.

The wife of our pretender to ſcience was quite of an oppoſite character; ſhe had wit, but of that ſuperior kind which has nothing to do with common ſenſe; the brilliancy of it paſſed over every thing that was natural and ſolid, running with avidity after abſurdities, and ſtopping at every thing that was wrong: added to this, ſhe had an air ſo childiſh, ſo inexperienced, ſo very unintereſting, that one could never be dazzled by her wit, or overawed by her wiſdom.

Such exactly as I have deſcribed them were Signor Martini Hiſallie, and the Signora, his lady, who, fancying they felt a raviſhing ſweetneſs from the ſociety of learned men, had their houſe conſtantly crowded

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with ſuch as did, or ſuch as thought they did, come under this denomination.

One day he invited my huſband and I to meet a party, who he aſſured me were almoſt all of the very firſt-rate underſtanding; we availed ourſelves of an invitation ſo flattering, as it ſignified he did not think us totally unworthy to mix in his moſt brilliant ſocieties, and we were exactly punctual to the hour of his appointment.

During a tedious interval, whilſt we waited for dinner, we all walked together in a very fine garden, which, having admired a hundred times before, I now regarded like any other common object, my whole attention being fixed on the aſſemblage of wiſe people, by whom I fancied myſelf ſurrounded: ſo great was my deſire to reconnoitre their different characters, that I was ſoon placed at the ſide of a lady, not only my warm friend, but one who poſſeſſed a redundancy of wit, who knew every body, and weighed their deſerts with preciſion.

The firſt queſtion I aſked was, if all theſe gentlemen were *really* learned, and if their country had been benefitted by the publication of their works.

"There are a few amongſt them," ſhe replied, "who have written with ſucceſs; but the name of learned men, which is given to *all* of them, you will ſoon find out is rather carrying the appellation too far; we grant, in this country, a ſort of licenſe to people that cannot employ themſelves better, to perſuade others they are capable of reaſoning; we liſten indulgently to their diſcourſes; we let them talk as much as they pleaſe, and ſometimes it happens that the auditors, by whom they are attended, being as great fools as themſelves, beſtow on them praiſes, which, though not of much value, have at leaſt the merit of not being counterfeit: there are others who harken attentively to theſe ignorant philoſophers, that they might afterwards laugh at them, not ſo much from malice as to build up a reputation of wit to themſelves, by tumbling down thoſe of their rival, and leaving them in ruins."

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As ſhe talked to me I ſaw one of the literati obſerving us, which made me inquire who he was.

"That little man," ſaid ſhe, "has compoſed in a trifling and ſilly ſtile many books, which are not liked by the public: however, he has the good-nature to be very well pleaſed with them himſelf; he pities the want of abilities in thoſe who do not partake of his raptures for his own works; and he inſinuates their deficiencies to certain women, who are always on his ſide, becauſe they believe the title of author and wit to be ſynonymous; their weight thrown into the ſcale of his vanity, gives him a conſtant recruit of ſpirits, and enables him to bear the ſlights to which his publications continually expoſe him: he calls this an upſtart age, too proud to be pleaſed, and too barren to be cultivated—ſo he waits with a great deal of complacency till another generation ſhall ariſe, to do him that juſtice which he is refuſed by the preſent."

"Ah!" cried I, "let us leave him to poſterity—but tell me, I beſeech you, who

is that man, which, by the continual diſtortion of his features, ſeems to threaten us with a fit of convulſions, and whoſe lips are in conſtant motion."

"He is one of our firſt *beaux d'eſprits*," ſhe anſwered, "always judging, always deciding—nothing that comes into the world can eſcape his cenſure; and to render his folly complete, there is nothing wanting but that he ſhould commence author himſelf, for which he declares he ſhall never find leiſure. He contradicts by ſyſtem—he breathes but to diſpute; he could not live without it—it is a habit inſatiable; it makes him juſtify whatever is condemned by the public voice, and he is always filling one's ears with apologies, due only to the worſt productions, for thoſe which are eſteemed the very beſt, under the ſanction of the moſt able critics."

"That perſon," continued my friend, "whom you may obſerve walking ſo cloſe to his ſide, greedily ſwallowing every thing he utters, without the poſſibility of putting in one word on his own account—you ſee in him juſt ſenſe enough to find out the want of

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it in others, and to make himſelf merry, becauſe Heaven has given them no advantage over him.—But pray look," ſaid ſhe, interrupting herſelf haſtily, "look at that pompous perſon who ſeems to be in one unbroken act of devotion; nobody doubts of its truth and fervency, as he is everlaſtingly adoring himſelf, and returning thanks to himſelf—obſerve how ſtrongly ſelf-ſufficiency is ſtamped on the leaſt of his features: in ſhort, you cannot miſs it, for they have no other expreſſion; it is this ſingle character which diſtinguiſhes his face from one that might otherwiſe be as well cut out in wood or in ſtone. He is a wiſe man, of a new date, little wit—*précieux*, a walking library—a half-fledged author—one who collects together, with great pains, an aſſemblage of Greek and Latin words to furniſh the apartment, which Nature, by ſome miſtake or other, left vacant: with this ſtock in trade, all of his own acquiring, he ſets himſelf up for the firſt literati of the preſent day; eclipſing, in his own opinion, all the dead as well as the living, who, if they happen to poſſeſs ſhining talents, he never ceaſes to abuſe and calumniate. But you are not,"

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cried ſhe, "to judge of all our learned men from the ſpecimen I give you of a few. Signor Martini is good-natured—he invites them all to his table—he likes them all too without exception, becauſe he has not depth enough to diſtinguiſh what is the difference between ſhadow and ſubſtance: we have, however, ſome before our eyes who are in the higheſt general eſtimation; but pique, jealouſy, and hatred, many years ago, drove from our country the moſt famous of our poets, to take ſhelter in another—there yet remains one to conſole us for his loſs, one whoſe brilliant imagination diſplays itſelf through all his portraits; one who is unrivalled in the ſtrength and vivacity which he gives to the images of his own creation—his works are always fine, always expreſſive; he writes as well in verſe as in proſe, and his converſation is even more delightful than his writings—we have one more poet who recommends himſelf by the great number of his publications, which pleaſes every body; to wit the moſt pungent he unites delicacy the moſt ſublime, a ſoftneſs, a politeneſs, which give additional charms to grace, and grace to talents—his moſt common converſation

verſation is quite a ſchool, where every one may profit both from his precepts and example—he writes tragedy divinely; if he had no other powers, in this line only he would be illuſtrious; every one admires the force of his imagination, and he will aſſuredly be handed down to poſterity. In his pieces he is bold, fierce, ſanguinary; ſometimes out of nature; but in civil ſociety he is of all men the moſt modeſt, the moſt gentle, the moſt humane, and the moſt amiable.

"Look at that man on your left," ſhe continued, "whoſe air is ſo meek, ſo timid, he is one of our beſt comic writers; but beſides being an excellent poet, he is one of the moſt diſcreet and wiſeſt men of the town; his ingenious comedies are always favourably received by the public, who cannot take by the hand a man more honourable, or who has better claims to their patronage: his plays are pleaſant, critical, chaſte; their morals juſt, good, and uſeful—the verſification in which they are conveyed, melodious, pointed, and natural. That perſon to whom he is ſpeaking is not unworthy your notice; he is zealous for the preſervation of true

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taſte—he has publiſhed ſome things, both ſerious and playful—he never lets any thing eſcape, which he thinks will inſtruct the world: in ſhort, it is ſaying all in all when I tell you I am ſure he would ſacrifice himſelf for the benefit of the public."

Here ended our converſation—dinner was announced—we placed ourſelves at table——where having ſatisfied the demands of a good appetite, I ſat myſelf to catch improvement as it flew round from the lips of a dozen *beaux d'eſprits*, none of whom were ſlow to communicate their opinions: the firſt who ſpoke was the great diſputant; he raiſed his voice alarmingly high, to intimidate and attack a poor little metaphyſician, who debated at firſt with the greateſt complacency on ſome ridiculous paradoxes, about the ſolution of which nobody but themſelves were intereſted: at laſt the diſpute grew warm, the *metaphys* trying to ſpeak without being heard by his boiſterous adverſary, the happy volubility of whoſe language left no interregnum in the lapſe of time: this mighty man declaimed with ſo much authority, that Signor Martini appeared quite charmed with his

his powers; he even encouraged the combat with all his might, and increaſed the fury of both parties, till it got to ſuch a height, that I made ſigns to Madame Martini to try if ſhe could ſtop the madneſs of their conflict.

"Ah! let them alone to their diſputes," ſaid the lady who had given me ſo much entertainment in the garden, "there is nothing to fear from its conſequences, but what our ſenſe of hearing may ſuſtain; however, to pleaſe me ſhe requeſted them to finiſh the debate, and alſo entreated they would have the goodneſs reciprocally to baniſh every *trait* of it from their memories. The acknowledged ſuperiority of her underſtanding, added to the beauty of her form, always gave her a decided influence; and to my great ſatisfaction ſhe did not exert it in vain on the preſent occaſion."

After our repaſt we followed Madame Martini to another apartment, who told us what a violent head-ach ſhe had taken from the fatigue of reading a new romance:——"Not," ſaid ſhe, "that I ever feel this complaint, except when I read novels:—

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how much pleasanter to engage with philosophy or erudition, than to set turning over pages in which I find nothing to amuse me. Oh! they are frightful books, made up of nonsense: but suppose them not absolutely foolish, yet they are so stuffed with adventures—gallantry—tender sentiments—flaming portraits—and delicate distresses—none of which rhapsody can possibly please a refined palate, that has only a relish for the sublime; what I would ask can recompence a woman of talents for the time she bestows upon them."

"I declare, Madame, you surprise me," I replied; "after counting up all the treasures of taste, which are called valuable in the works of imagination, to hear you descry them in this manner, we only expect from them decency, spirit, and sentiment: surely if we meet with a combination of these essential merits, in any production, though the author should happen to be unknown, he is not only entitled to the thanks of his reader, but to have his abilities respected."

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"And I as freely acknowledge," returned ſhe, "that your deciſion is extremely fair, as far as it regards certain perſons, who are fitted for theſe ſort of light ſtudies; for my part, if I read romances with any thing like approbation, they muſt be ſuch as inſtruct us in politics—that expand the ſoul—that feed it with the milk of philoſophy—which ſpeak of aſtronomy — which enrich the mind with ſolid underſtanding: in ſhort, were I ever to be pleaſed, it muſt be with a romance truly dogmatical."

"A book of this kind," ſaid I, laughing, "would meet, I fear, with a poor reception from every body but yourſelf; I am ſure the frivolous circles in which you live would not promote the ſucceſs of a dogmatical novel."

"However," replied ſhe, "one ſhould not feel fatigued to death, and devoured by the head-ach, where the ſoul is ſufficiently engaged: nay, Madame, you muſt permit me to obſerve, that all the literati would doubtleſs entertain the ſame opinion with myſelf."

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"In return," ſaid I, "allow me, who am not a profeſſed literati, but a woman of ſimplicity, willing to pleaſe and to be pleaſed; allow me ſo far to diſſent from your more enlightened judgement, to declare, perhaps, at the riſk of my ſmall reputation, that I am ſo great a fool as to be delighted with the ſort of reading you hate; for my part, when I take up a novel, I do not propoſe making it my ſerious ſtudy, but my agreeable amuſement; and from the choice of my ſelections it is very ſeldom that my aim is diſappointed."

"And pray, Madame, by what is your choice decided on thoſe occaſions?"

"Always by the name of my author," I replied, "for the man who is capable of writing ſenſe once, will never for his own ſake write nonſenſe afterwards. I give the preference to ſuch writers as take Nature by the hand, and will go no farther than ſhe leads him—I then take an intereſt in the characters he exhibits, and the ſcenery he diſplays: on the contrary, if I want information from the ancients, or would explore the

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ſecrets of phyſic, I call for the books that treat upon the ſubject of my inquiries. Dogmatical romances do not come under this deſcription; and ſcience, when preſented in the pages of a novel, is very much miſplaced. I deſire to find in what I read for my amuſement ſterling wit, chaſte ſentiment, uſeful morals, good diction, and characters well ſupported."

"Ah! Madame," cried Madame Martini, with ſufficient vivacity, "if this were all really neceſſary to your favourite compoſitions, there would be nothing in the world ſo eaſy as to write romances; one may produce a thouſand ſuch as you deſcribe, without a ſingle talent."

"By no means," I retorted, with much of my foreſt ruſt, of which I could never entirely diveſt myſelf; "your obſervation is by no means a juſt one; it requires the very firſt of natural talents to write well from the imagination. Do you not conſider the difficulty an author muſt find to throw a rein over the prancing ideas of his fancy, that he can only regulate them by the voice of right judge-

ment—that he muſt not let them overſtep the bounds of probability, or even advance truth itſelf, if that truth ſhould be difficult of belief. Have you reflected on what knowledge of the world—of men—of manners—and of nature—he muſt poſſeſs, before he can pourtray them: and is all this to be accompliſhed without talents?—No, Madame, I cannot ſuppoſe this ſpecies of writing ſo frivolous as many pretend to think it; I myſelf have known men, whoſe ſuperiority of judgement is univerſally acknowledged; I have heard more than one of them declare, nothing is ſo uſeful in forming the minds and manners of young people as the beſt of thoſe works which you generally condemn; they even prefer it to the ſtudy of hiſtory, and it is becauſe I always liked them that I have taken upon me to defend them."

Madame Martini would not enter into my ſentiments, but perſiſted in wiſhing romance and erudition might be conſolidated:—— "Would it not," ſaid ſhe, "be a thouſand times better—would it not make invention much more eſtimable, if the authors you are ſo fond of were to unite in the ſame work the

the moſt profound learning with the moſt choſen ſentiments, and the moſt wonderful fiction."

"I think not," was my reply, "and for this ſimple reaſon—men of ſcience would not run after learning, and expect to find it in the pages of a romance, and the lovers of romance would turn them over, if any ſuch there were, without reading them at all." I cannot tell who got the victory in this conteſt; I rather believe we both grew tired of it, each being ſatisfied ſhe ought to have conquered, becauſe ſhe was in her own opinion the moſt reaſonable.

After ſaying all, and perhaps more than all, we were licenſed by common ſenſe to ſay, on our proſe ſubject, we changed it to poetry; Madame Martini would have it, that all the verſes of every nation in Europe were a Gothic invention, and that the poets who took any merit to themſelves had very much miſapplied it.

"That, Madame," ſaid I, "is, becauſe you are not born with a certain taſte for

verſes, as other people are not born with a certain ſenſibility for the charms of muſic, which cannot be called their fault—the fault is in their organs, and not in themſelves; neither is this deficiency any great misfortune; we never grieve that the perſon we love does not play on the harpſichord; nay, to ſay truth, a general diſlike of whatever is harmonious has its root in nature, and not in diſinclination to reliſh it; our organs are ſtill anſwerable for their own imperfection."

"I aſſure you," replied Madame Martini, "there are particular verſes, which I do not hate, ſuch as have a ſort of——a ſort of——in ſhort, a ſort of a turn that I do not know well how to deſcribe, or what to call it, but I think it is ſomething approaching near to good proſe.—Indeed," continued ſhe, "I do not comprehend what is that pretended harmony, which men of learning demand in verſes that are to be ſtamped with their approbation; it ſeems to me the harmony, about which they make ſuch *eclat*, depends merely on a mechanical arrangement of numbers made out of ſyllables; a very common rule, by which all men who think well may, if

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they would ſet about it, alſo write well, one making as good verſes as another."

The little metaphyſician liſtened to the whole diſcharge of our wiſdom; the other *beaux d'eſprits* followed his example; even the great diſputant himſelf honoured us with his attention; and all of them were withheld by their politeneſs from interrupting us; but the grand climax with which Madame Martini finiſhed her obſervations on poetry and poets, would have reſtored them to the freedom of ſpeech, if the pompous diſputant had not engroſſed himſelf a much larger ſhare than belonged to him—taking up the ſubject, he gave us a laboured ſophiſtical diſſertation on poetry in general, which pleaſed nobody—which wearied every body: we would have interrupted him to relieve ourſelves, yet this could not be done, for he had a way of ſhutting up all mouths but his own. After a long tedious harangue it cloſed with *this* declaration, that for his part he did not like argument, he did not want to captivate by reaſoning; all that he deſired was to convince by the grand powers of philoſophy.

Converſation now being let looſe, branched into an infinite number of directions——we talked of erudition—of *belle d'eſprits*—of public performers—of politics——when again theſe topics gave place to others upon Signor Martini's coming into the apartment of his wife, accompanied by a gentleman, whoſe arrival animated every one of our party with the moſt lively pleaſure.

He whom we received ſo joyfully was a great ſpeaker, poſſeſſing the rare talent of never tiring his hearers—one who had an everlaſting fund of delightful anecdotes—pleaſant hiſtories—and eternal *bon mots*: moreover, he was continually diſtributing falſe news, preferring it ſo much to what was founded on truth, that every day he frequented the moſt brilliant aſſemblies, where he always found a good ſupply of the article he ſo well knew how to manage; and whatever it was his fortune to pick up there, he liberally ſcattered elſewhere, very much to the amuſement of his auditors—though a charming embelliſher of fiction, he did not withhold from truth the leaſt of its graces.

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Amongſt the many agreeable trifles with which this ſenſible man enchanted us, one little adventure that lately happened to a friend of his own was ſo extremely curious, that I diſtinctly remember the whole of it, and reſolve to give it a place in theſe memoirs, as I write them only for the amuſement of my ſolitary hours—will not the motive, from which I take upon me to throw my life upon paper, in ſome meaſure plead for my preſumption—I hope it will—as well as anſwer for its wants of every ſort, whether of variety, diction, or exactneſs—as my pen traces the ſcenes I have paſſed long ago, I do not feel like an author—I have no vanity to gratify by the hope of preſent praiſe, or poſthumous fame—nobody inſpects what I have written; and if I am pleaſed with it myſelf, I think it ſufficient—but hereafter ſhould it fall into any other hands than my own, any partial friend who may think it worth preſerving, I entreat of that partial friend to retouch it before it meets the eyes of an impartial world!—This egotiſm has almoſt made me forget what I promiſed—a ſhort hiſtory.

A young gentleman named Juſtini, paſſionately loved a beautiful woman, who to perſonal perfection added a mind more perfect—their births were equal—their fortunes nearly ſo—their hearts were in ſtrict uniſon—they felt exactly the ſame ſenſations, and it was only for each other that they felt them: there was no obſtacle to raiſe itſelf as a bar to their wiſhes; the Chevalier aſked her hand—obtained it—they were married—and this marriage offered to the view every felicity that may be expected, when Hymen and Love are in friendſhip together—never were they in better intelligence, the bride ſtudied by every poſſible attention to pleaſe her huſband, who on his part ſtrove to prevent the ſmalleſt of her wiſhes: in ſhort, it ſeemed the only contention between them which ſhould be the moſt ſubmiſſive—the moſt ſatisfied—the moſt ardent—but one of thoſe changes, to which men of the world are liable at times, however ſincerely attached, however beloved by the object of his love, one of theſe untoward accidents, which makes a man inconſtant even againſt his better inclinations, croſſed the path of their happineſs,

happineſs, and Juſtini fell the victim of a ſnare, which he had not ſtrength to reſiſt.

It put on the form of novelty, the more effectually to entrap our young huſband—the marks of his enſlavement to a new paſſion were ſo viſible, that the Signora could not ſhut her eyes to the growth of his indifference for herſelf; this diſcovery gave the greater alarm, becauſe ſhe was perſuaded another now occupied the only heart ſhe ever deſired to poſſeſs; the ſuperſtruction of her misfortune was to be ſeen, but the foundation of it ſhe could not ſee, though the gentleman who told us the anecdote could explain it very well, and it was thus:

The Chevalier Juſtini had, without meaning to be fickle, looked too long, and perhaps with too much pleaſure, on a young muſician, who from her firſt appearance on the ſtage engaged the public attention—ſhe was handſome, ſhe had merit in her profeſſion, and ſhe was new to the eyes of Juſtini, which was more in her favour than all her other agreeables—he viſited at her houſe—led there by the error of believing that

that he merely desired to be entertained with her singing, when in fact he was all the while most desperately in love: he soon made the discovery of his case, and the same passion carried him there every day with redoubled ardour; his liberality secured his success, for a musician will ever give a preference to the most generous of her admirers—he showered down upon her a thousand marks of prodigal fondness—he seldom remembered his wife, and thought only of her rival.

Notwithstanding his caution to keep this affair from the Signora, it nevertheless reached her ears; it was a deadly cause of chagrin—nor was she unacquainted with the name of the girl who had prepared it for her: yet she had so much good sense, that she never upbraided him—on the contrary, whenever he came back to her, and his family, instead of receiving him with frowns, she ran to him with transports of tenderness, and those smiles which had long been banished from her dimpled mouth were recalled to bid him welcome, on whom her whole decreasing store of happiness depended; he felt the delicacy of her conduct, would sometimes blush

blush at his follies, but could not correct them.

The town now began to talk of Justini's new attachment—even the married men blamed him, but those who were not married raved at his perfidy, and both expressed their astonishment that he should quit the most lovely woman in the world for a made-up girl, who, though pretty enough, was in comparison no more than a glow-worm to the sun.

The Signora feigned not to know of this horrid intrigue; at last it was impossible she could pretend blindness, because, as is generally the case, her good-natured female *friends* determined at all events her eyes should be opened: she jested her husband on the reports raised against him, and the manner in which he received her efforts of pleasantry let her into the secret of the violence with which he entertained this new passion.

"Why," cried he, in a tone of sternness, "do you watch my steps?—is it I that set

you

you the example?—do I place ſpies on you, or trouble myſelf about your conduct?"

"Alas!" returned ſhe, "I never watched you—my information comes from the public voice."

"And do you," cried he, angrily, "put any dependance on what is ſaid by the public?—believe them liars, or believe implicitly all the nonſenſe they tell you; do which you pleaſe, Madame, but I beſeech you to let me be my own maſter; whether you agree to it or not, I ſhall certainly follow my inclinations—do as I pleaſe—live as I pleaſe—and viſit whom I pleaſe. I give you the ſame liberty I take; what more would you chuſe?"

"I deſire only your heart," ſhe replied, burſting into tears, "reſtore me that—take from me every thing elſe—I aſk only the treaſure of which another has robbed me."

Seeing her weep, and being touched with her words, from remorſe, if not from affection, he tenderly aſſured her, ſhe alone ſhould ever

ever poſſeſs it—which expreſſion of kindneſs put an end to her complaints, knowing that whether he was ſincere at the moment or not, complaints would be ineffectual, to fix him in good, or turn him from bad inclinations.

He requeſted ſhe would never again ſpeak to him of her ſuſpicions. She obeyed, but the melancholy painted on her countenance ſpoke the ſituation of her mind plainer than words could have done

Juſtini grew more and more infatuated to his miſtreſs, as if to give his amiable wife the better opportunity of demonſtrating her own excellencies—ſhe ſtrove to baniſh every trace of mortification from her features—ſhe charged her eyes with joy, inſtead of the ſorrow that had filled them, and was the firſt to vindicate her wanderer from thoſe aſperſions which truth or malevolence caſt upon him.

This mild conduct—this gentleneſs ſo engaging, ſometimes troubled the illicit pleaſures of the huſband: remorſe often combated

bated with love in his bosom, and jealousy was at last added to his other torments.

When he first visited his new favourite, he found her house totally unornamented; but soon he perceived a change, which very much astonished him—it suddenly became a cabinet of curiosities, where variety, taste, and expence, shewed they had rivalled each other in collecting the whole together.

He asked who was the generous donor?

"An incognito," she replied, laughing, "though in truth I believe I have nobody to thank for them but yourself."

His chagrin is not to be described, much less his confusion—he knew not what to say, but at last told her it was not him who had sent them—upbraiding her for giving him so much uneasiness in seeing her readiness to accept the gifts of another.

"Truly," cried she, "am I so rich as to warrant my refusing them. No, indeed! you are not to expect I shall turn away from my

my door the good fortune that knocks at it, unleſs you place me in a ſituation to make my accepting theſe coſtly preſents unneceſſary, by the ſuperiority of your own bounty."

He did not juſt then ſatisfy her demands; freſh offerings were daily laid upon the altar of her vanity, and ſhe was now convinced a lover of conſequence waited her acceptance, as ſoon as ſhe ſhould have diſmiſſed Juſtini. But why not make them *both* aſſiſt to complete the harveſt ſo happily begun—the thing was feaſible—and ſhe reſolved, if it could be done, to find out the liberal unknown, with the *noble* deſign of ſharing her favours between them.

Juſtini, excited by example—piqued by emulation—grew more munificent, more prodigal to the mercenary muſician: he exerted all his invention to ſupply her daily with different parties of pleaſure, which bore all of them the ſtamp of novelty; but what moſt cruelly diſpleaſed him was, to find that another kept pace with him in all his advances.

Vexed

Vexed at what he thought an affront from his miſtreſs, he threatened to leave her, unleſs ſhe diſcovered the intrigue of which ſhe made ſo great a myſtery; but ſhe avowed her ignorance, as to knowing who was her benefactor—and he pretended to believe her, reſolving to watch all her motions, in hopes not only to detect her, but to find out the fantaſtical lover her arts concealed from his knowledge.

With this view he ſupped more frequently at her houſe; and being one evening ſtanding at the window, his inquietudes received freſh food from a concert of many inſtruments, accompanied by one charming voice, who ſung words full of paſſionate tenderneſs—irritated by this ſerenade to his miſtreſs, he furiouſly ran towards the performers, intending to demoliſh their inſtruments; but they were already flown—he then turned his vengeance on the fair tranſgreſſor, whom he abuſed moſt violently: ſhe made a thouſand proteſtations—he refuſed to give any of them credit, and ſhe could not prevent him from leaving her, under the idea that as ſoon as

he

he was gone his place would be ſupplied by the unknown.

He haſtened home a prey to melancholy, which his wife, with her uſual ſweetneſs, tried to diſſipate; aſhamed at her kindneſs, his ſenſes occupied by his diſtraction, he did not utter a ſyllable; neither did the Signora, who reſpected even his ſilence, attempt to interrupt it; and fearing the marks ſhe gave him of affection added to his remorſe of conſcience, ſhe ceaſed to trouble him with them whilſt he remained perfectly inſenſible to her various methods of endeavouring to make him leſs unhappy.

The next morning he received a billet from a female, to tell him that every thing he had imputed to a rival was only done for his own ſake; the preſents, the muſic, were not ſent to the girl he ſupported but to give him pleaſure; that the air ſhe had cauſed to be ſung when ſhe ſaw him ſtand at the window expreſſed only the tender ſentiments her heart had long felt in his favour; ſhe wiſhed he would attach himſelf ſolely to her; aſſured him it was an arrangement which would

 make

make up his felicity, but ſolemnly declared never to divulge her name or condition till he had firſt quitted the young muſician.

Juſtini was effectually rouſed by this ſummons to quit one tender engagement for another, which promiſed to be attended with equal ardour; it was delivered to his own hand in a myſterious manner, and when he could ſpeak for aſtoniſhment, he aſked every poſſible queſtion of the perſon who brought it, but could get no reply from him, except that he waited for his anſwer.

Willing, at whatever price, to know the writer of this extraordinary letter, curious to ſearch for the foundation of this adventure, he not only wrote to the lady in terms highly flattering, but alſo promiſed, upon his honour, that after going once more to the muſician's houſe, merely to feed on the deſpair which muſt torture her on finding there had no new lover appeared to replace the old one.

"Allow me this ſingle viſit," he wrote, "it ſhall never be repeated, and my whole life

life ſhall be afterwards devoted to your lovely ſelf."

The inviſible lady ſent a polite approbation—many letters paſſed between them—in ſhort, the correſpondence was purſued with ſo much vivacity that, his heart enſlaved without ſeeing its conqueror, his reaſon became leſs clouded by error as her power increaſed over him—he ſaw he had been miſtaken in his little muſician—he reſolved to quit her—to ſurrender himſelf entirely the devotee of a charming woman, whoſe lively wit and captivating tenderneſs quite tranſported him even to a degree of enthuſiaſm.

He addreſſed her with more warmth than before; he entreated, he implored, that ſhe would reveal herſelf to his ſight; he told her he had broke with the other for ever.

"I am raviſhed," ſhe replied in her anſwer, "that you renounce an engagement that can do you no honour, yet fear to riſk the ſhewing myſelf to you—It is not that I fear pleaſing you, or that I ſhall fail to merit the beſt of your regards; but you are a man

who has already given ſuch marks of inconſtancy, that I fear you will forſake me alſo."

Sometimes Juſtini thought of the pain his fair, his amiable wife would feel if ſhe knew of this ſecond engagement — again the wiſh of beholding her rival — it ſtaggered his momentary deſire to be faithful to the intereſting Signora, who, in all his various changes, he ſtill conſidered as unequalled by any of her whole ſex, in complacency, in nobleneſs of ſoul, in lovelineſs of perſon, or in ſweetneſs of diſpoſition; yet all her amiable qualities did not make him forget the object of his romantic entanglement from her he received ſo many magnificent tokens of the eſteem ſhe entertained for him, as filled him with the higheſt idea of her rank and riches.

On a certain day, when a great aſſemblage of diſtinguiſhed perſonages of both ſexes were invited to celebrate an annual feſtival, Juſtini hoped that by ſpeaking to all the women the eyes of her who loved him would betray her to his view.—His dreſs was hardly completed for the occaſion when the ſame man

man who always conveyed their letters arrived from the unknown with a ſuperb ſcarf, and deſired he would put it on; but with all commanding him to take no methods of finding her out, as important reaſons obliged her to hide herſelf from him; yet bid him to remember that ſhe loved him tenderly.

He went to the aſſembly rather diſappointed, yet failed not to wear the ſcarf—he examined attentively the ladies one by one, but neither his ſcarf nor his glances produced the *eclairciſſement* he eagerly longed for, and he returned to his houſe as ignorant as he was before — He again took up his pen, making it trace ſuch animated entreaties for an interview, that ſhe no longer reſiſted his impatience, conſenting with a good grace to gratify his wiſhes, on condition that he would allow her meſſenger to be his conductor.— It was eleven o'clock at night when the man came for Juſtini, who readily obeyed all her injunctions — they mounted a carriage together, and he was deſired by his guardian to ſubmit that a bandage might be bound over his eyes till he ſhould arrive at the houſe of his miſtreſs. Perſuaded by this new myſ-

tery that the moſt glorious fortune awaited him, he conſented to every thing, and after making a long excurſion through the ſtreets, the coach at laſt ſtopped, when our lover deſcending from it, was led to an inner apartment, where the ſight of his eyes was reſtored to him; but what was infinitely more acceptable was, the aſſurance given him by his guide that he ſhould immediately behold her who paſſed all her hours in adoring him, whoſe happineſs depended on him, and who would expire at his feet if he did not receive her with affection.

He ſaw many lights approaching him—he was ſure they preceded this charming, this long-expected miſtreſs—his heart beat the alarm to ecſtaſy—he opened his arms—and—not the wife of another, but his own wife, ruſhed into them.

He was charmed with the ſtratagem ſhe employed to reclaim him—he fell down at her knees—his former love more than revived, it blazed with ardour—ſhe was even leſs dear to him in the moment of union than in that of reunion, and his fidelity can never

never any more be ſhaken by muſicians, incognitos, or the whole hoſt of coquettes combined together.

This firſt hiſtory was much better told by the friend of Signor Martini than by me, nevertheleſs I ſhall attempt a ſecond, delivered by the ſame gentleman, though convinced I could relate his anecdotes to much more advantage than I can write them.

## HISTORY *of* LAZETTA.

At a certain time of our life the fire of thoſe paſſions which have blazed in our youth is pretty well got under, and if any warmth remains, it is only then the embers of ſenſibility, which ſhed a ſoft glow over our hearts to cheer us in the purſuit of more ſolid attainments. — An old Counteſs reſided at the court of Florence in all the *eclat* of a brilliant eſtabliſhment, till being arrived at that age when reaſon gathers together her reflecting powers, ſhe determined on quitting the gay world for the pleaſures of tranquil retirement. She had a daughter fifteen years

old, who ſhe took with her to one of their eſtates in the country in order to finiſh her education: this young girl did not cheriſh the idea of ſolitude quite ſo fondly as her mother; the one retired to hide her growing infirmities; the other would have remained to enſlave mankind, by expoſing to their view her growing charms.

Beſides, fifty and fifteen, what ſort of companions would they make for each other?

The more ſhe thought on being confined to the ſight of her mother only, the more uncomfortable ſhe felt—ſeveral ſigns of ſecret inquietude eſcaped her, which the Counteſs perceived, and willing to remove her chagrin, fixed on a young lady, named Lazetta, to be her conſtant companion. She received her with joy—they loved each other ſincerely—and the Counteſs was pleaſed with this mutual friendſhip, becauſe in point of birth they were equal, though in fortune great, very great was the difference indeed:—by the extravagance of a thoughtleſs father, Lazetta, at his death, found herſelf reduced to a horrible ſtate of dependance—ſhe was beautiful

without

without vanity, wiſe without pretenſions, polite without conſtraint, complacent without meanneſs, and lively without affectation; in ſhort, ſhe poſſeſſed that happy art of univerſal enchantment, which Nature ſometimes beſtows on the moſt favoured of her children; ſo that it was no wonder both mother and daughter ſhould tenderly attach themſelves to an object every way ſo uncommonly amiable—*one* had hourly cauſe to congratulate herſelf on the choice ſhe had made; the *other* ſaw a bright example of all human perfection before her, which ſhe delighted to copy.

They had been ſettled ſome months in the country, when unfortunately the young Count, who had been abſent a year, came to make his mother a viſit—he ſaw Lazetta for the firſt time—he loved at the firſt ſight—and he loved her for ever—His ſoul was in uniſon with his eyes—that ſoul was full of Lazetta—they alone were permitted to declare its ſentiments, and they told them ſo plainly, that the Counteſs, who had expoſed him to this danger, but *too* well underſtood their language, and grew extremely uneaſy, watch-

ing

ing every turn of his countenance, but hushing her fears as well as ſhe could, by telling herſelf how impoſſible it was that a ſon of *hers*, though he might like the girl, would ever condeſcend to think of her but as an amuſement; this opinion ſhe ſoon eſtabliſhed as a fact; ſhe even was aſtoniſhed at her having thought ſeriouſly about the matter.

How abſurd to ſuppoſe a young man of his expectations would connect himſelf to poverty.

She did not know that young man inherited none of her avarice—ſhe did not ſurmiſe that the poor, but accompliſhed Lazetta was dearer to him than all the wealth in the univerſe.

To ſmother his paſſion in ſilence would not always content ſo ardent a lover—he wiſhed to make his miſtreſs as perfect as himſelf in the leſſon his heart had taught him.

"I adore you, beautiful Lazetta," ſaid he; "my eyes have told you this truth a thouſand

thouſand times before my lips ventured to pronounce it."

She betrayed neither ſurpriſe nor confuſion at receiving a declaration ſhe had long and fearfully expected—ſhe liſtened to him with firmneſs, but her anſwer did not flatter him; ſhe ſtifled an affection ardent as his own, whilſt, for the ſake of her benefactreſs, who could not be pleaſed with a union ſo much to his diſadvantage, ſhe gave to his entreaties a decided negative.

He was ignorant of her real ſentiments—he pined to death at her ſuppoſed indifference—ſhe would no more truſt herſelf alone with him—ſhe was always in his ſiſter's apartment, and thither he as conſtantly followed; yet to this ſiſter he durſt not open his heart, leſt in the playfulneſs of her temper ſhe again ſhould let drop hints that might alarm the Counteſs, on whoſe bounty he ſolely depended—he knew what great views ſhe had formed for his eſtabliſhment—he conſidered how difficult it would be to humble her exalted projects—he grew ſad, and his

his ſadneſs ſoon put on the complection of deſpair.

In a ſtate of utter deſpondency he went with the forlorn hope of obtaining an audience from his miſtreſs—her heart argued in his favour, and ſhe conſented to hear him.—"Cruel!" cried he, "will you never be touched by the woes you make me ſuffer?"

"Accuſe not me," ſhe replied; "I am neither cruel nor unjuſt; it is you who inflict on yourſelf the ſorrows of which you complain.

"Reflect on what you are—on what I am—think of the bars that divide us—ought we to give way to the paſſion which poſſeſſes us?"——She ſtopped at theſe words—ſhe turned pale, and repented that ſhe had uttered them.

The Count, tranſported with joy, ſeemed at once to have ſhook off all his troubles:—"Since I am dear to you," he exclaimed, "my mother ſhall ſee me at her feet—ſhe will be touched with compaſſion—my ſiſter loves

loves you — ſhe ſhall unite her prayers with mine — the Counteſs ſhall be melted by the tears of her children — ſhe will ſanction our innocent affection — ſhe will complete our felicity."

Lazetta, more prudent than the Count, did not give way to the influence of falſe hopes: — "We ſhall never be ſo happy," ſaid ſhe; "nothing can be more deluſive than the expectations you have formed—No, no, do not conceive that the Counteſs will ever approve your choice, or that we ſhall ever be leſs unhappy — my fate attaches me to your ſiſter — my neceſſities fix me under the protection of your family—you have not the ſame reaſons to detain you on this ſpot—we ought to part—we muſt ſeparate—in pity leave me — in compaſſion return to Naples, from whence you came to trouble my repoſe —you will *there* recover your compoſure — you will there drive from your memory her who in ſolitude cauſes you ſo much vexation." As ſhe ſpoke he regarded her with a mingled air of tenderneſs and reproach: — "Ah!" cried he, "it is too plain that you meaſure my affection by the weakneſs of your own—

you

you would ſee me depart from you—you expect that I ſhould forget you—recal your ſentence of baniſhment—ſoften this inflexible prudence—conſent that I ſhall ſpeak to my mother, or I bid her—my ſiſter—you—yes, even you—I will bid all, all I hold moſt dear in the world, adieu for ever!"

Struck with his conſtancy—frightened by his threats, ſhe no longer withheld him from declaring to the Counteſs what were their ſentiments for each other. He went with this intention to her apartment, but the look with which he fancied ſhe received him threw a damp over his ſpirits that deprived him of all motion, except to fall at her feet, to hide his face in the folds of her robe, and in broken accents to make the confeſſion of his deſperate love for Lazetta.——"What!" cried his exaſperated mother, "dare you acknowledge to me this unpardonable preſumption?—Dare you tell me you have fixed your affections on the poverty-ſtricken Lazetta, at the very time when, by inceſſant application, I have procured for you one of the richeſt alliances in the kingdom?—Raſh young man, you know my powers—you know my unbending

bending diſpoſition—immediately renounce your romantic nonſenſe, or I ſware by the ſacred name of Heaven to ſend from your ſight for ever the girl who has overturned your reaſon and reduced you to madneſs."—A ſentence ſo haughtily, ſo decidedly pronounced, drove the Count from her preſence in agonies not to be deſcribed—and ſhe, not truſting to any thing but her own management for a reform in his ſentiments, inſtantly cauſed a carriage to be made ready, and ordered Lazetta to enter it. The Count had walked out to recover from the ſhock his mother's violence could not but coſt him—his ſiſter fell at her feet and pleaded for them—the cruel woman was not ſoftened by the prayers of her daughter, or the tears of Lazetta—the weeping friends were torn from the arms of each other—ſhe was thruſt into the carriage—the horſes, as if they ſhared the Counteſs's impatience to get rid of ſo dangerous an inmate, flew with her from the caſtle, and were out of ſight in a moment.

It would be needleſs to talk about what were the frantic emotions of the Count when he came home and found that Lazetta had been

been ſpirited away; but the ſight of them had no effect on his mother, except to give her new occaſion for rejoicing at the wiſdom of her own conduct; yet, with addreſs peculiar to herſelf, menaces ſucceeded to careſſes, and careſſes to menaces, till ſhe had brought him to ſomething like reaſon, that made her hope he would in time forget the fair ſubject of his indiſcretion, whilſt, in truth, it was only for her ſake that he ever put on even the appearance of calmneſs — it was only to ſave her from the rage of his mother — for the ſame reaſon, though he found out that Lazetta was removed to the houſe of her aunt, he let a conſiderable time elapſe before he attempted to ſee her: at length he could no longer reſiſt his inclinations, and ſtole a private interview, which the Counteſs never ſuſpected, but delighted with the change in his humour, ſhe ſuppoſed he had vanquiſhed his imprudent paſſion. This calm did not laſt long; a gentleman who had happened by chance to ſee Lazetta, fell ſo violently in love with her, that he demanded her of the aunt in marrriage; his propoſals were accepted by her, from the neceſſity of their ſituation, and the Count was ſoon informed

formed of the whole tranſaction: what he had ſuffered before was in compariſon no more than the ſting of a gnat to the bite of a ſcorpion—he ran to her aunt—he offered her all he poſſeſſed in the world, if ſhe would not ſacrifice her niece to his rival.—"Alas!" ſaid ſhe, "what is it you aſk of me? You are no ſtranger to the misfortunes of my family—you know the deplorable ſtate of my niece, yet you perſuade me not to give her to a man of quality, whoſe riches will more than repair the injuries ſhe has ſuſtained from fortune—your ſituation truly touches me—I would guard her for you if I could do it with a conſcience free from reproach; but as it is, your own good ſenſe muſt tell you that what you aſk of me it is impoſſible I ſhould be able to grant."——Poor Count! diſtracted as he was, he ſaw too much truth in her aſſertion even for him to contradict it; and he cried out in the paroxyſm of ungovernable grief, "Oh! that ſhe would marry me in ſpite of all oppoſition!"—then ſeeming to recollect himſelf, he added—"Oh! no, no, this muſt not be; ſuch a ſtep would drive my mother to revenge it even by taking away the life of Lazetta; ſhe

would be the firſt victim of her reſtleſs fury! —What am I to do?—Aid, adviſe, counſel me, I beſeech you!"—"What will ſignify the only advice I can give you," ſhe replied; "it muſt be to forget my niece, and you will not ſubmit to my counſel."——"But," ſaid he, "if you really feel for my misfortunes, accept my aſſiſtance—let me place you in a ſituation to guard my adorable Lazetta from the arms of another. Ah! I would tear her from the arms of another, and my death ſhould anſwer for the outrage."

"Stop!" cried ſhe, "you are running on at a ſtrange rate; what muſt the world believe us to be, if my niece were to take advantage of your liberality, or I ſhould permit her to accept favours from any hands but thoſe of a huſband?"

He fell on his knees—he forced upon her ſome valuable diamonds, which ſhe gently returned, but with an air of dignity that accompanied all her motions, and which he found irreſiſtible, ſo that he went back to the caſtle in a worſe ſtate than he left it—the prudent aunt had concealed her niece from his

his ſight, chuſing to keep them aſunder at a juncture ſo critical; which equitable ſtrictneſs added nothing to his ſmall ſtore of comforts, for what was before melancholy, became phrenzy. The Counteſs eyed him with jealouſy, and fancied he muſt have ſeen the miſtreſs ſhe prohibited, but ſhe kept theſe thoughts to herſelf.

Next day the Count returned to the houſe where the treaſure of his ſoul was depoſited; he was not expected—he entered abruptly—he found her repoſing her languid head on the boſom of her affectionate aunt—his courage reanimated, he fell on his knees before them—he ſoon got Lazetta of his party; together they beſieged the heart of this reſpectable woman; one at a time ſhe might have reſiſted, but a union ſo ſweet, ſo ſtrong, ſo pathetic, made her better judgement captive to their will: ſhe reluctantly aſſented to their marriage, named the day when they ſhould meet to join their hands: and whilſt they enjoyed the tranſports of their own happineſs, ſhe arranged every thing for the ceremony ſo privately, that it never might have tranſpired, but for the gentleman to whom Lazetta had

been promiſed. Without being the oſtenſible, he was the remote cauſe of its reaching the ears of the Counteſs—ſhe knew of his purpoſed alliance with the girl ſhe dreaded for her ſon; and being uneaſy that it was ſo long deferred, ſhe entered into a confidential diſſertation, ſo artfully contrived, that the intended bridegroom fell into the trap ſhe ſpread for him; and he confeſſed, that the lady's repugnance to his ſuit gave him no hope of ſucceſs: adding, for many weeks he could not even prevail on her to receive his viſits, which ſhe refuſed, ſometimes under pretence of indiſpoſition, at others ſhe was always from home when he called—in ſhort, ſo full was this diſappointed lover of his own misfortunes, that in complaining of them he let fall enough to alarm the Count's mother, who by her emiſſaries ſoon after came at the truth; when ſeizing on all the valuables ſhe had before preſented to her ſon, and which in fact were her own property, as well as the whole riches of the family, ſhe ſent him her commands never to ſhew himſelf again in her preſence: nay, ſhe even kept her daughter pennyleſs, that ſhe might at no time have

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it in her power to aſſiſt her brother with the neceſſaries of life. The poor Count made many efforts to be recalled from baniſhment, but without ſucceſs: his wife's aunt, who on a very ſmall annuity ſupported them all, ſunk under the weight of their poverty, added to her own, ſo that now there remained nothing for him but his affection, his beautiful young Counteſs, and an infant which ſhe had borne him. In hopes to melt the heart of his mother he ſent her the child, yet ſhe turned it from the door, as ſhe had before done its father, without ſo much as once caſting her eyes on its lovely and innocent countenance.

Wild with deſpair, the Count forced his way to the preſence of this obdurate parent, whom he taxed with being the author of that crime for which ſhe now viſited him with unceaſing vengeance. "I have ſuffered," cried he, "all that your rage, joined to extreme indigence, can inflict: I am a father, without bread to ſuſtain that wretched being which is a part of yourſelf, yet you refuſe to take it under your protection—I owe the misfortune of your diſpleaſure to the tempta-

tion you placed in my path—how did you expect I could look on ſuch charms with impunity?—you who have cauſed my diſtreſs, pity the conſequences of my error—hear the cries of your only ſon—receive him to the arms of your mercy—extend them to embrace the wife he adores, the child who can never have offended you, and who is dearer to him than his loathſome exiſtence."

"This is fine tragedy cant," replied the impenetrable Counteſs; "you are no longer my ſon—I no longer acknowledge you—ſo far from being touched by your daring complaints, I behold your miſery without feeling it—I can even rejoice in your ſufferings, as the juſt puniſhment of your diſobedience."

"It is well, Madame," cried he, as he ran from her with marks of inſanity ſtamped on his features; "it is well that you can be gratified with the anguiſh of your ſon—you ſhall ſoon underſtand to what the greatneſs of his deſpair can reduce him." The barbarous anſwer of his mother he concealed from his wife, and for ſome time they contrived to ſubſiſt by the aid of their very few neighbours;

neighbours: but there is a ſort of pretended charity that grows languid by exerciſe, and this poor recourſe at laſt entirely failed them. Heaven, who gave them a ſon, demanded him from them, and the meaſure of their woes was filled.

This affectionate, but unfortunate and deſperate young couple, without friends, without ſuſtenance, without hope, reſolved on quitting the world—one hid her ſorrows in a cloiſter, the other buried his griefs in a convent: entering into this ſevere penance for a paſſion they could not reſiſt—what a puniſhment did they inflict on themſelves to linger out their days of youth and love—ſeparated from each other, to feed on tears—to loath life—to pray for diſſolution.——Yet hard as this lot might appear, fortune was not yet tired of perſecuting them. Certain religious of the houſe Lazetta had choſen, learnt by ſome chance the adventures of their beautiful penitent, and formed ſo ſtrong a cabal againſt her, that ſhe was forced to quit their ſociety: a nun, who felt for her misfortunes, wrote to a relation at Naples in her favour. Lazetta advertiſed her dear huſband

of her removal after ſhe arrived there—his convent was in the ſame place, and ſhe requeſted of him an hour's audience. This new diſtreſs that had fallen on his ſtill adored Counteſs ſenſibly affected him: he dreaded to ſee her, becauſe his paſſion for her was violent as ever, and he tenderly entreated ſhe would make choice of another retreat, without perſiſting in a wiſh, which if indulged, though the interview were to be only for a moment, might end in their eternal deſtruction.

The charming Lazetta found in the Count's anſwer ſomething that ſhe miſconſtrued into cruelty, at leaſt indifference, and reſolved to ſee him: ſhe went to his convent—ſhe entered it whilſt he was at prayers with the reſt of his community—his down-caſt eyes, his arms folded on his penſive boſom, his fallen countenance ſallowed by grief—the habit of penitence that covered his waſted limbs:—as ſhe gazed on him with intenſe ardour her eyes were obſcured with tears, her hands expanded to Heaven, and her feet were rooted to the earth: ſhe ſtrove to ſpeak, but it was only a groan that ſhe uttered. The Count

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ſtarted at the ſound of her voice—he ſaw her fall to the ground—he flew to ſupport her—he raiſed her in his arms—he claſped her to his heart, and from the boſom of this paſſionately beloved huſband the gentle ſpirit of Lazetta took its flight to the regions of immortality. The Count's ſoul, unable to ſuſtain the double ſhock of finding and loſing the object of its adoration in the ſame moment, gave indications of quitting its worn-out manſion of clay, which fell motionleſs by the ſide of his dead wife, from whence it was conveyed to his cell, where he concluded the ſhort remnant of his days in making preparations for a reunion to his Counteſs, which hard heartedneſs could no more poiſon with its bitters, or death any more diſſolve.

I can never think of this melancholy hiſtory without deteſting the character of the Count's mother; but a woman who is guided by her ambition only is capable of the moſt terrible exceſſes. I made the ſame comment before the circle to whom the little intereſting ſtory was related, and all the perſons who compoſed it joined in condemning the

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unnatural Countefs. It was late when we left the houfe of Signor Martini, extremely well pleafed with our day's amufement. But why fhould I diftinguifh this day from any other, every one of which was marked by new proofs of Rofino's increafing tendernefs for me, and folicitude to procure me all manner of *agrémens*. As we were returning home, I expreffed to him my furprife at the great number of literati abounding in Florence.

"You are, perhaps, ignorant," faid he, "that this town has once been confidered as the very cradle of fcience; *Cofme le Grand* may be called the great ftock from which they originated; that is to fay, of their regeneration in Europe at the commencement of the fixteenth century; he encouraged the expanfion of talents by unlimited liberality, under the fhelter of his favour; there flocked from all countries the flower of literature; the fame of his generofity to men of learning brought them together in numbers, particularly from Tufcany. Fame fpoke of them throughout Italy—it did not ftop here—their genius, their fpirit, their elegance became equally

equally the admiration of France, Spain, and England; ſince which time the *goût* for letters have ever been in ſome degree preſerved amongſt us, though I am obliged to confeſs the perfection to which we were arrived is falling very faſt into decay, becauſe the prince and his favourites diſregard the ſciences, and hold in contempt all men who are wiſer than themſelves; every prince of the preſent day ſtands pretty much in the ſame predicament; they would fain baniſh from their courts ſuch men as cannot be foils to their own brightneſs—but this is very indifferent policy; it would be better, perhaps, if they condeſcended to reflect on this truth, that the knowledge of human nature is a ſcience of all others the moſt valuable—it is the ſource of politeneſs, politeneſs is the cement that holds in uniſon the tranquillity of their ſubjects, which harmonizes the ſoul of violence; and if its attainments were cultivated by princes, they would leſs generally ſuffer from conſpiracies, or be overthrown by revolts—beſides, this love of ſcience alſo communicates a certain uprightneſs of principal, a certain moderation of temper, which

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hinders men from being unjuſt or cruel; therefore, if deficient in taſte, from policy alone miniſters, as well as their maſters, ſhould patronize the polite arts, and not beſtow on ignorance the praiſes or the rewards that belong to real learning and true genius; they have only to diſtinguiſh between the two, to be governed in their diſtributions more by judgement, and leſs by caprice—then would they have no reaſon to complain that they rule over ſubjects uninformed, barbarous, lazy, voluptuous, or frivolous. It is not," he continued, "to the flouriſhing of thoſe charming ſciences that the ancient inſtitution ſhould be obſerved of conferring public honours on men of talents, as well as on heroes: on the contrary, inſtead of adding to our happineſs, it may, under our preſent government, create as much vexation: the chance would be too great againſt the man of merit obtaining from the partiality of corrupt judges the prize for which he contended. Shame would be all the reward he muſt expect to reap from the ignorance, intrigue, and hypocriſy of thoſe who would get themſelves appointed the arbitrators; the wiſe

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would every day ſee their wiſdom eclipſed by the folly of fools, and the virtuous muſt ſtand aſide to make way for the vicious; all would be wrong perſpective—men of letters would be thruſt into the back ground, whilſt magnificent blockheads would be brought forward with a roll of pretenſions in their hands, deſcribing the kings of Egypt and Babylon, without knowing any thing more about them than what is contained in their name; it is ſuch men as theſe who get the higheſt ſeats in the preſent republic of letters, and climb into the poſſeſſion of the ſtate's beſt literary powers. Hereafter it would not ſurpriſe me to ſee united in the ſame page of hiſtorical panegyric the firſt of our greateſt writers with the meaneſt of our preſent pretenders." Here Roſino ceaſed ſpeaking—we had been a full hour in the carriage—I hardly thought it a moment, and was really diſappointed when we ſtopped at the door of our houſe.

The more perfect our happineſs, the more we ſhould force ourſelves to reflect on the mutability of human bleſſings; it is well if we meet with no interruption to our joys—

be it ſo; theſe ſerious thoughts in the very midſt of them will add pungency to our feelings, which a fancied ſtate of ſecurity is apt to deprive of their edge, or which is much more likely to happen, ſhould misfortunes follow in the rear of our felicity; by allowing ourſelves to admit of the poſſibility that they may overtake us, we are acting the part of a wiſe general, who watches the enemies approach, that he may not be taken by ſurpriſe. I advance this caution to others, whoſe felicity may be as exquiſite as my own, and whoſe change from one extreme to another may be equally ſudden; the ſolemn occaſion of my appeal I am now going to experience the extreme pain of reciting.

Roſino was left to the ſucceſſion of immenſe riches by the deceaſe of an uncle who reſided at Smyrna; and we had been married but a few months when the news of his death, with the bequeſt he had made to his nephew, reached us at Florence: he muſt go to take poſſeſſion—we would not be ſeparated, and I became the voluntary companion of his voyage: we carried with us thoſe delicious ſenſations, which made all places,

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all climates, all elements alike charming, becauſe love attended us every where—yet in ſpite of this everlaſting fund of felicity an unaccountable melancholy took poſſeſſion of us as we ſailed from Leghorn to Smyrna; we tried to rally each other out of a weakneſs for which we could find no excuſe, but our raillery always ended in tears; in the day we ſpoke of nothing but gloomy ſubjects, chiefly turning on the woes we ſhould ſuffer, if by any chance we ſhould ever be ſeparated; at night our ſleep was ſhort, interrupted, and full of terrors: in ſhort, every thing we felt ſeemed to announce ſome terrible misfortune that ſuſpended over our heads. Towards evening, on the third day of our navigation, we found ourſelves chaſed by a Tunis veſſel; we had only eight pieces of cannon, thirty ſailors, and twelve paſſengers:—ah! how poor a proviſion to reſiſt an enemy ſo much our ſuperior. Yet we had no choice, we muſt fight or ſurrender. Roſino infinitely preferred death to ſlavery.

"I will try to preſerve you," cried he, tenderly preſſing me to his heart, "to ſave at once your life, and your freedom; but if I cannot

cannot accompliſh both, better that we expire together."

The Captain approached us trembling; the enemy was faſt ſailing towards us—our terrible, our laſt adieus were interrupted—orders were iſſued for every body to put himſelf in a ſtate of defence. Roſino, whoſe extreme valour augmented at the danger of my ſituation, took upon him in ſome degree the functions of commander: his exertions were almoſt ſupernatural—a dreadful ſlaughter commenced, but victory declared not for us: the corſair ſent a boat to ſummons a ſurrender; the only anſwer they received was from the mouth of our cannon: preſently the ſhip grappled us, and we were boarded in ſpite of all oppoſition. Roſino, my dear Roſino, threw himſelf with deſperation on the infidels—his example was followed by the other paſſengers—Roſino fell. I ſaw him fall—he expired in my ſight. I ſeized the ſame arms he had uſed—I threw myſelf into the combat to revenge his death, or to periſh with him. The latter was my chief aim, but I miſcarried in its accompliſhment. I

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ſay nothing of my torments, let others meaſure them for me.

The Turks, ſurpriſed to ſee a woman with arms in her hand, ſuſpended their blows, a lenity that only made me ruſh upon them with redoubled fury—my tears—my cries—my efforts were all in vain—Roſino was no more—deſpair painted courage on my countenance and gave vigour to my nerves, inſomuch that my blows would not have ſhamed a man reſolved that his life and liberty ſhould go together—At laſt I was overpowered by numbers; they wrenched from me the weapons which annoyed them, whilſt the captain of theſe cruel vanquiſhers approaching would have conſoled me—he offered me his hand to lead me to his ſhip, but I told him ſternly, I would die by the ſide of my huſband; upon which four men ſeized upon the bleeding body and threw it overboard. My ſcreams, though they rended the air, did not prevent their ſacrilegious interment of that beloved body once ſo dear to my ſight. As to me, I was conveyed more dead than alive to the enemy's ſhip, where I was ſhut up in the cabin a cloſe priſoner.—It was here that

I lamented the untimely fate of my love, without witneſſes and without ceaſing: — "Happy moments of infancy!" I exclaimed, "Dear foreſt, whoſe ſhades embofomed me, for what have I exchanged you? Alas! for the tranſports and pains of a paſſion in which you never could have inſtructed me — to ſee the ſole object of that paſſion expire before my ſight — to behold myſelf a ſlave — in the power of infidels, the victim of their plunder, and expoſed to their inſults!"

Aly Bengly (the name of the Corſair by whom I was held in bondage) overheard my mournful complaints — I had ſpoken in Italian, which was known to him, and when I leaſt expected him he ſtood before me — he addreſſed me in the ſame language, trying to calm my fears, but I had ſo much dread of this man that it was long ere I could liſten to him with any thing like attention. — "You figure to yourſelf, Madame," ſaid he, "your diſtreſſes greater than they are — you expect to find in me a maſter who will either profeſs for your charms *too* much kindneſs, or for your condition too little lenity — Learn in future to know me better — Aly is no monſter —



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he is neither luſtful nor barbarous—I have fought—I have vanquiſhed—but no unmanly action ſhall diſgrace my victory—if I have power I will employ it to gain your confidence—I reſpect your ſex in general—I more than reſpect your ſweetneſs united to fortitude—I would if it were poſſible give you inſtant freedom—judge then whether you have any thing to apprehend from the uſage of your vanquiſher."——I looked at him half doubtful, half willing to believe his fair promiſes:—"If," ſaid I, after a ſhort pauſe, "if my tears, if my miſeries have indeed touched you with compaſſion, return me to the family of that adored huſband who fell a ſacrifice to your valour; they will pay my ranſom; they will thank you for the humanity you ſhew to the relic of their ſon: do this, and I will call you the beſt of men, the moſt generous of maſters."——"I have a partner," he replied, "with whom my ſpoils muſt be divided, or, I ſwear by the head of Mahomet, you ſhould be reſtored to your relations without my putting any price on a gem of beauty and excellence which I conſider beyond all eſtimation."——"But this partner," retorted I impatiently, "will *he* not diſpoſe of the

part you ſay he claims in your captures? However high his demands, I have friends who will joyfully accept them."——"I cannot anſwer for that," ſaid Aly, ſhaking his head; "neither is it my good fortune to have any thing to do with the diſpoſal of your perſon by our treaty, which muſt be ſacred: my partner is entitled to every captive I may make in my ſeveral voyages."—"Alas!" cried I, interrupting him, "what am I to expect from the maſter you threaten me with; will he, like you, pity and reſpect my deſolated condition?"—I waited for his anſwer trembling from head to foot; nor was it calculated to remove my tremors.—"If he ſhould love you," ſaid he, "there is nothing he will not do to ſecure your heart; ſhould it refuſe to ſurrender, he will at any rate make himſelf happy; yet do not deſpair of better treatment, I have influence over him, and will uſe it for your ſecurity; more I dare not promiſe, or can I exempt my conſcience from giving him an account of my prize; I have yet to cruiſe a month before I return to Tunis, perhaps in that time we may find an opportunity of ſending you to Italy; or if we fail, I ſhall try if my aſſo-

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ciate will cede you to me before he has ſeen you, and if I can prevail, I will advance your ranſom, and ſet it down as the beſt action of my life."

There was ſo much energy, ſo much of divine truth in the expreſſion of this good Turk, that I could have fallen at his feet to expreſs my gratitude. During the time I remained with him his conduct to me deſerves the appellation of paternal, and as long as I continued under his protection I had nothing to complain of but my evil deſtiny, which preſented no chance of my being liberated, either by ſending me to Italy, or by the condeſcenſion of Aly's partner, who refuſed to part with any women ſlaves, for reaſons he would explain hereafter. I wetted the cruel letter with my tears — theſe tears eaſed my burſting heart, but did not relieve my condition. — There were other ſlaves on board who were taken prior to us; I heard two of them converſing together, and one of them ſaid to the other, in a tone of rage, "Yes, the ingrate abandoned me; neither the loſs of my fortune nor freedom diſturbs her repoſe in the arms of another." — "Ah!" cried he, to

whom the complaint was addreſſed, "had ſhe remained obſtinate in becoming your wife, do you not conſider the riſque ſhe muſt have ran even of loſing her life."

"Hold!" ſaid he, "ought ſhe to have valued her life in compariſon of that man's felicity, who would have ſacrificed his heart's blood for her?"

"Come, come," replied his friend, "you would receive no ſatisfaction if you were told grief, for your misfortunes, had made her miſerable."

"On the contrary," cried the firſt ſpeaker, "I would a thouſand times rather know ſhe inhabited her tomb than that ſhe lived in the arms of another. . . . Oh! with what joy ſhould I hear ſhe died faithful inſtead of living perfidious—the more happy ſhe is, the more cauſe I have to mourn—I hate her huſband, I deteſt herſelf."

"And yet," retorted he, who reaſoned with the diſappointed lover, "I have heard you utter high-flown ſentiments, which ought

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to carry you above the low regions of revenge."

"It is not revenge," he replied, "it is the refinement of paſſion. Had ſhe preferred death to inconſtancy, ſweet would have been the pleaſure I ſhould have found in mourning for her all the days of my life."

I paid great attention to what paſſed between theſe two ſlaves, their ſubject was a ſort of balm to my grief. I fancied my own thoughts were expreſſed by him who lamented his unfaithful miſtreſs—I confeſſed to myſelf, that the loſs of Roſino by death was a leſs evil than if his heart had been eſtranged from me, and from that moment my ſad heart began to be ſatisfied, whilſt it greedily fed on the idea. Aly, having made ſome more prizes, came to tell me he was now going to Tunis, where he ſhould be forced to leave me with his aſſociate, who was called Mouſlouf, and employed by the Dey to find a handſome woman worthy to ſupply the place of his chief favourite, which was the reaſon Mouſlouf would not accept the ranſom Aly had offered for me.

"I aſked," wringing my hands, "what was to become of me if I was forſaken by him?"

"No doubt," ſaid he, "your charms will procure you the great honour of becoming firſt Sultana to our mighty Prince."

"That fate," replied I, weeping, "which, from error, you may account glorious, would humble me to the loweſt abyſs of miſery.... To give up my virtue, my honour, my freedom, would be to purchaſe favour from the greateſt Monarch on earth at a price much too high—I diſclaim vice and ambition, I only deſire to live virtuous and unknown."—I believe my plainneſs offended him; he rebuked me for ſuppoſing the ſervants of Mahomet could be guilty of error.

"The error," ſaid he, "of which you accuſe us, is entirely your own; as little do you ſeem to underſtand the nature of virtue—true virtue is to conform with grace to the cuſtoms of that ſtate to which we are confined."

"What!"

"What!" cried I, "is it consistent with virtue that I should yield to the criminal desires of your Prince?"

"They are not criminal," he replied, "because permitted by our law; neither on your part would you be culpable for submitting voluntarily to that situation, which, as a slave, you dare not refuse."

"Dear good Aly!" cried I, casting myself at his feet, "save me, if it be possible, from a fate so terrible—I would rather die a thousand deaths than cover my own fame, and the memory of my husband, with disgrace!"——My tone, my words, and the tears by which they were interrupted, restored me to the kindness of my protector; he raised me up, bade me be comforted, and persuaded me to believe how probable it was that, before we arrived at Tunis, Mouslouf might have found some other beautiful woman who would have no objections to her good fortune, if she should be happy enough to please the Dey.—"But," said I, "should I escape the fate that threatens me from the Prince, may not the same difficulties attend

me

me from the maſter to whom you conſign me?"

"I hope not," he replied; "he is covetous, the deſire of a great ranſom may be the means of guarding you even from himſelf." —Hear now with what juſtice he reaſoned, for when he conducted me to the preſence of Mouſlouf, that horrid Turk clapped his hands together, and cried out, in a perfect ecſtaſy, "By Mahomet! this charming woman is not for the Dey!"—Aly told him I was a perſon of condition, recommended me to his care, adviſing him to treat me with the utmoſt reſpect, and flattered him that the ranſom he might expect for me would amply repay him for the purity of his conduct towards his new charge.

"She pleaſes me much," anſwered Mouſlouf; "can you ſuppoſe I would let her go for double the money any one could offer me?"

This brutal man could not but ſee the diſtreſs into which he threw me. Aly alſo ſaw it, and had the generoſity to offer ſo

large

large a ſum for my redemption as ſurpriſed and gratified me.—I thanked him with my tears. Mouſlouf laughed at the propoſition, and ordered that I ſhould be immediately conveyed to the apartment of his women. The ſame night he came to viſit me; I received his firſt advances with a great deal of firmneſs, which ſeemed to make ſo little impreſſion on him, that I ſaw it would be neceſſary to change my mode of defence—accordingly, when he came again I tried to win him to my purpoſe by ſoftneſs; neither did this anſwer—he grew ſtill more bold, he was everlaſtingly at my ſide, he convinced me I had every thing to fear, and I was ſufficiently occupied in rejecting his importunate addreſſes. Tired with purſuing me any longer as a lover, he ſhewed himſelf even more diſguſting as a maſter.

"Since my prayers, my entreaties are without a recompence," ſaid he, haughtily, "I ſhall reſerve them for thoſe who have more gratitude and leſs vanity; as for you, my ſlave, the creature of my pleaſure, I command you to gratify the wiſhes of your maſter; I give you two days to prepare your-

ſelf

ſelf for the honour of adminiſtering to my entertainment." His menaces frightened, but did not make a coward of me; I would not abate of my reſerve, and he ordered the two old women who attended me, that, when they ſaw me plunged in a deep ſleep, they ſhould open the door of my apartment to give him admittance.—They too well executed their commiſſion, but the noiſe he made at entering, or rather the vigilance of my better angel, ſuddenly awoke me; I uttered the moſt piercing ſcreams—he ran to my bed-ſide—his odious arms were extended to embrace me—my ſenſes returned, and directed me what to do.

"Mouſlouf," ſaid I, "moderate your tranſports—liſten, I conjure you, to a propoſition, the framing of which has coſt me ſome meditation; give it your conſideration alſo, and afterwards diſpoſe of me as you pleaſe."

My words ſeemed to make ſome impreſſion on him; he ſeated himſelf near me, and bid me proceed, declaring his readineſs to forgive all that was paſſed, provided I did not intend

intend to put his patience to any further trials on the ſcore of my obſtinacy.

"It is my intention," ſaid I, ſtill trembling, "to make you ſatisfied with me, but I would fain transform the paſſion you entertain for me from illicit to legitimate; the laws by which I am governed forbids that I ſhould be your miſtreſs—your's forbid that you ſhould honour a Chriſtian by making her your wife; may not an expedient be found to ſet aſide the obſtacle by which our mutual happineſs is impeded?—Ah! if you loved me with ardour, you would either embrace my faith, or cauſe me to be inſtructed in your's."

"Is it poſſible," cried he, interrupting me joyfully, "that you love me ſo entirely as not only to become my wife, but for my ſake to renounce the errors of your religion? Heaven itſelf has inſpired you—Mahomet will finiſh the miracle he has began; it is only neceſſary to read the precepts contained in his Alcoran, to make you a true believer, and the beloved wife of Mouſlouf."

"You

"You make me moſt happy," returned I, "in receiving my propoſal with ſo much approbation—retire now, and to-morrow, if you pleaſe, ſend me an Iman or a Dervis, to render me more worthy of your favour."

Mouſlouf, perſuaded that I really meant to turn Mahometan, reſpectfully withdrew, and the next day ſent an Iman to finiſh my converſion—full of piety and zeal the miniſter thus addreſſed his preſuppoſed convert: "Oh! infidel woman! may the Great Light that lightens the univerſe open the eyes of thy clouded underſtanding, ſo that thou mighteſt ſee clearly the divinity of his truth—the profundity of his wiſdom—the immenſity of his grandeur. Oh! Holy Prophet of God! grant that this poor infidel, who deſires to be thy ſervant, may truly embrace thy laws, and become a faithful mother to a multitude of the faithful."

"I thank you for your good wiſhes," ſaid I, "but it is you who muſt inform me how I am to deſerve them. I was born in the Chriſtian faith; make me comprehend why

your's

your's is ſo much better, and I will then readily relinquiſh my own."

The miſtaken, but good man, put himſelf into a poſture of devotion, and addreſſed another long prayer to his prophet, which ended with this ſolemn invocation: "Source of all Wiſdom, lend me ſtrength, enliven my zeal for this ardent undertaking to thy glory; it is a creature of thy own creating, whom I would ſave from thy wrath, and commend to thy mercy: Thou who leadeſt us through all the changes of the earth, inſpire my heart with underſtanding, and my tongue with more than mortal eloquence, whilſt I preſume to unfold the holy myſteries of thy ſacred Alcoran."

I hope nobody has been induced from the diſplay I have made of my character, to ſuppoſe I really meant to turn Mahometan:—— had there been any other mode, by which to eſcape pollution and gain time, I might bluſh to confeſs I had deſcended to uſe ſo ſacred a pretence for a cloke to my ſafety:—but what arts, what ſubterfuges are not excuſable to break from the hold of a raviſher, who acts from

from authority, and whoſe inſults are juſtified. Great as my danger had been, I ſhuddered at my own timidity whilſt the Iman was pronouncing his prayer—I was ſenſibly ſtruck with the pious air and humble voice with which he delivered it. "And this," ſaid I to myſelf, "is the man whom I have preſumedto uſe as an agent in my hypocriſy." I prayed Heaven would forgive the deception, and requeſted the Iman to begin his leſſon of inſtruction.

"It is you," ſaid he, "that muſt firſt begin by ſifting from your ſoul all the prejudices of education, for till you get rid of theſe incumbrances how will you be able to form a true judgement of the inconteſtible truths I ſhall tell you?"

"By bringing them into compariſon," ſaid I, "with thoſe of my own religion, which, like you, I have held inconteſtible."

"Well then," he replied, "I am willing to bring them to the trial you call for; the doctrine of Mahomet is founded on plain reaſon, therefore ſtrong and immutable; it is

ſuperior

ſuperior to all other religion, becauſe its precepts are more clear, more ſtrong, more pure, more full of truths, and was practiſed by the great Prophet himſelf in his earthly pilgrimage—I will ſet before you his own great example; what more would you deſire?"

"I would deſire," ſaid I, "to know if your Mahomet, to make you revere his religion, was not forced to flatter your ſenſes, and to court his proſelytes by the attractions of voluptuous pleaſures? I would aſk, if, to ſeduce your obedience, he has not promiſed you a hoſt of women, every one of them more beautiful than another?"

"How ſtrangely," he replied, "have you been miſinformed; the Arabs, who were the firſt ſect of our ſublime Prophet, had not ſo many women as you ſuppoſe: thoſe people reputed moſt learned in religious policy, by order of their Great Maſter, ſtinted them in the article of numbers. It is true Mahomet did promiſe to augment them, not ſo much to pleaſe Muſſelmen, as to complete the grand ſyſtem he had undertaken, by multiplying his followers. Do you believe a

man can be more happy with ten wives than with four? instead of being more satisfied, he is the more perplexed; and if there were no limitation of wives, there would be no end to his embarrassments; so far therefore from favouring the senses, what by you Christians is called indulgence of our passions, is in fact the trial of our submission, and the exercise of our patience—but see this law of our wise Legislator in whatever light you please, I appeal to your own decision, whether it is best, like your Christian men, to make divisions in families, ravish the hearts of wives from the bosoms of their husbands, giving them children, who by your laws, they are obliged to maintain as their own: is it better, I say, to commit adultery, a crime so enormous, as makes it condemned by Nature and reason, or to adopt the custom of many wives?—even allow it to be sensuality, yet it is not vice!—will you any longer entertain doubts that the laws of Mahomet are wiser than the laws of infidels?"

"How," said I; "are you sure that Mahomet was not an impostor?"

"Oh,

"Oh, Heaven!" exclaimed he, "what blaſphemy do you utter! Eternal Truth, pardon in this woman the ignorance that blinds her; ſhe is yet in the dangerous paths of falſehood, deign to draw her thence, and conduct her to thy ſacred moſques."

I did not interrupt the enthuſiaſtic Iman, who ſaid, turning to me, "If you are convinced that the morals of Mahomet are reaſonable, you will know he cannot be an impoſtor; that his doctrine is true wiſdom, and his precepts the accompliſhment of all juſtice, and of all virtue."—"I wiſh you to tell me what miracle he has done to prove the divinity of his miſſion?"

"Your doubts diſpleaſe me," he replied; "however, I am willing to remove them in hopes of your converſion; know then the prodigy Heaven worked in his favour, for I am going to explain it. The ſuperb *Abrahah*, who worſhipped the peacocks, aſſembled an innumerable army to deſtroy the temple of Mecca: God did not employ the feeble arm of his creatures to avenge them on thoſe idolaters, but put ſuch obſtacles in their

way, that the rebel Abrahah was forced to quit the territories of Mecca, to prevent his own deſtruction, as well as to preſerve the frantic troops he commanded."

I behaved during theſe chemical diſcourſes of the Iman in a manner not abſolutely to diſcredit the ſolidity of my vocation. I thanked him for the inſtructions he had given me, and ſeemed eager to make ſtill deeper inquiries into their myſteries.

"Why," ſaid I, "if the truth of Mahomet is ſo well eſtabliſhed, why is it that the Arabs, as well as other nations, did not immediately ſtamp his pretenſions with their ſuffrage?"

"Becauſe," he replied, "our Prophet could not at once eradicate all the prejudices which overrun their minds, and devoured their underſtandings. He publicly fought alone in a country infected by wrong maxims, of courſe repleniſhed by his enemies.—Here it was that he conquered them ſingly, without any other ſuccour than the word of truth.—Here it was that he had the glory to

ſee proſtrate at his feet the boldeſt of his adverſaries: it was at this criſis that the ſtubborn nations bent their necks to his yoke, lifting up their hands with one accord to the Moſt High—had they perſiſted in their blindneſs, no doubt the ſabre Heaven ſuſpended over their heads, would have fallen upon them."

To flatter Mouſlouf with the hopes of my converſion, I liſtened to the Iman, who in his turn was deceived. He was ſure my objections were ſo feeble, that he ſhould ſoon maſter them—he conveyed this intelligence to Mouſlouf, whoſe joy on the occaſion was that of a man intoxicated by his good fortune—luckily for me his wife loved him extremely; ſhe plunged herſelf into an abyſs of grief on perceiving his affections were eſtranged from her, and devoted to another—ſhe reſolutely ſpoke to him, and threatened to tell her father (a merchant of great riches) that he was about to take a new wife, who was not only a ſlave, but a Chriſtian; a capital crime by the laws of Mahomet, to intermarry with ſuch as are by that ſect conſidered as infidels. Mouſlouf, who entertained no

doubt that I ſhould ſoon be of his own religion, anſwered her reproaches with temper; but preſſed the Iman to be ſpeedy in my converſion, that ſhe might loſe the power ſhe now poſſeſſed, of bringing him to puniſhment—the Iman, animated by true zeal, redoubled his efforts; I ſtill put him off from one conference to another—his importunities became diſtreſſing—I hardly, with all my diligence, could find new evaſions for the entreaties he made me, to declare myſelf a good Muſſelman.

"Have you not told me," ſaid I, "that Mahomet will accept none but willing proſelytes? is it not contained in the Alcoran, that Chriſtian ſlaves, changing their belief to embrace your's, ſhall be only perſuaded by the invincible arguments of truth, being neither haſtened or conſtrained to adopt it? It is becauſe I will not take up lightly a new opinion, which muſt be to me in its conſequences the moſt eſſential of my life; it is becauſe I wiſh, when I acknowledge your faith, to hold it with more ſteadineſs than I ſhall have preſerved my own.—It is for theſe weighty reaſons that I deſire yet a little more time,

time, that by the benefit of your further kind assistance I may not be an unworthy proselyte to your principles."

The Iman, though a bigot, was so pleased with my reinforcement of arguments, that he consented to obtain for me the time I requested: yet Mouslouf was much dissatisfied with him for wasting so much time to so little purpose; not so the wife of Mouslouf, she was flattered by my resistance, and every delay I made gave vigour to her languishing hopes, that her husband, who till he saw me, had tenderly loved her, might return to his former affection, which had led him to wave the privileges of a Musselman, and to content himself with one wife only; she had complained of his intentions to her father, who was not inclined to blame his son-in-law for complying with a custom so much in favour of his inclinations, and, in despair at her bad success, she flew like a mad woman to my apartment.

"Christian!" cried she, looking at me with a terrible sort of admiration; "Christian,

tian, is it really true, that, to deprive me of a huſband I adore, you conſent to forſake the religion in which you was bred, to embrace another you do not underſtand?"

My tears were flowing when this lovely Turk broke in upon me, and what ſhe uttered did not ſerve to dry them up. She laid her hand on her breaſt—ſhe caſt on me a doubtful glance of compaſſion.

"You weep," ſaid ſhe, in a ſofter tone; "why ſhould you weep, if the change you meditate takes place with the conſent of your heart?—ah! you do not ſpeak—you intereſt me more than I can expreſs:—I hate—I love—I would ſerve you—perhaps if you was not a ſlave. . . . . Honour me with your confidence—diſcover your true ſentiments—never, never, will I betray them."

"Charming ſympathy!" I exclaimed, catching hold of her hands, preſſing them to my lips, and bathing them with my tears; "Yes, Madame! I will confide in you! you ſhall ſee the inmoſt ſecrets of my boſom—I will

will die, but will neither be the wife of Mouſlouf, nor a Mahometan."

"Excellent woman!" cried ſhe, embracing me; "I offer you my friendſhip, command it to the utmoſt. Shall I procure your liberty—ſhall I return you to your own country?"

"Oh! Madame," ſaid I, "your goodneſs oppreſſes me—do this—I deſire nothing in the world ſo fervently."

"Very well," replied ſhe, with a ſatisfied air; "I muſt not make my viſit a long one—depend on my promiſe.——In the mean time continue to amuſe the Iman as well as Mouſlouf with falſe hopes:—if he ſhould again offer you violence, let me know it; for the reſt depend on my vigilance." Saying this ſhe preſſed my hands, and ran haſtily from me, and that night I ſlept in tranquillity.

Short as our interview had been, it reached the ears of Mouſlouf; he was extremely curious to know what his wife had been ſaying

ing to me. I guarded our ſecret, telling him ſhe came to me with the deſire of aiding my converſion, and that her condeſcenſion had not been without its effects: he pretended for the preſent to be well enough pleaſed, but immediately planted ſpies on the ſteps of his wife; and hearing that ſhe intended me a ſecond viſit, this he abſolutely prohibited; after which he ruſhed into my preſence in a fury of rage, which I am not able to deſcribe.

"Deceitful Chriſtian!" he cried, his eyes ſparkling with the fire of diſappointment; "moſt perfidious of thy infidel ſect! thou haſt dared to trifle with my vengeance—thou deſieſt my love—thou didſt never mean to be my wife—thou didſt never deſign to be a Mahometan!——I deſerve it—I deſerve it all.... But remember thy ſituation—think upon my power, and tremble at the uſe I ſhall make of it." He immediately withdrew, and left me thunder-ſtruck at his menaces, as well as aſtoniſhed at the means by which he was ſo well informed of my real ſentiments; as to his wife, I did not once

ſuſpect

ſuſpect her of treachery; had I done ſo, my thoughts would have injured her.

Soon after Mouſlouf quitted me, the two women, who before waited on me as his future wife, received his orders to ſhut me up in a very ſmall room, where I was to ſee nobody but one ſlave, who brought me refreſhments in very ſcanty proportions. In this ſolitude the idea of Roſino never forſook me; once being in a profound ſleep, fancy preſented him to me, even with more minuteneſs than I could figure him to myſelf when waking, and I cried out, "Is it you, dareſt Roſino?—is it you, beloved huſband?—ah! why have you abandoned me—what country do you inhabit?" He anſwered not—he kiſſed the tears from my cheeks—he pointed with his hand—I ſaw the town of Bruſſelles riſe before me, and he made me underſtand that there I ſhould find happineſs; in a moment we were tranſported to a diſtant country; and in another I found myſelf on the outſide of a ſuperb houſe, where all was ſilent as death. Roſino knocked at the door—it opened—we entered together—but I ſaw him no more, though my dream

continued

continued; I thought a great number of people ran towards me from ſeveral apartments, who all ſeemed delighted to ſee me; a lady whoſe countenance bore the traces of affliction claimed me as her daughter.

"You are come at laſt," ſaid ſhe, "to aſſuage my grief, to diſpel the remorſe by which I am devoured; come to my arms, dear child of my heart, thou from whoſe infant cries I was borne away in the foreſt of Ardennes."

The cry of joy that I uttered on feeling myſelf preſſed to the breaſt of my mother awakened me—my pillow was wet with my tears—my ſoul was overwhelmed with rapture—but, alas! I was ſtill at Tunis, ſtill a priſoner, and expoſed to all ſorts of danger.

"Heavens!" I exclaimed, "what a viſion has fancy exhibited to cheat my ſight—a mother who I ſhall never ſee, a huſband loſt to me for ever—deluſive ſhadows, you only appear before me to make my misfortunes more inſupportable!" Mouſlouf, who heard my ſighs, and groans, entered my chamber,

chamber, and aſked if I yet repented of having abuſed him by falſe appearances?

"I ſtill adore you," ſaid he; "I would help it if I could; I do not love you from choice, but neceſſity; let us be friends, embrace my religion, and become my wife." I replied, that a maſter who treated me with ſo much rigour could neither hope nor expect to inſpire affection.

"The ſoftneſs," he replied, "which I firſt uſed to gain your heart did not act in my favour; you forced me to be more cruel to make you more kind."

"Still it is loſt labour," I retorted; "for I deteſt you with all the hatred of which I am capable."

"Threaten me not," ſaid he angrily, "with hatred, unleſs you mean to be its victim — the only reaſonable thing you have to learn is to love and reſpect me."

"You know," cried I, in a milder tone, "that

"that I have received with docility the lessons of your Iman."

"And what are you the better for them?" replied he sternly—"Expect that I shall chastise you till you have changed your manners as well as your principles."—From this time he daily augmented my punishment, and of all his slaves I was certainly the most miserable; his wife, with whom my fate was entrusted, could not render it less severe, because all Mahometans are allowed to treat their slaves as they please. At last, dreading my sufferings would supersede my resolution, in a fit of despair, she had again recourse to her father, who, now moved by her entreaties, exhorted his son-in-law to give me my liberty or dispose of me to another merchant. He would not sell me to another, he said, on any account; but bid him cause me to be informed, if I could procure my own ransom he would accept it, and I might go where I chose; for when he had got the money he should trouble his head no more about me. *Kasné*, which was the name of my lovely friend, no longer restrained from seeing me, came to my chamber to tell me her husband's

last

laſt determition; we thought it favourable, and rejoiced in our good fortune: ſhe ſtaid with me whilſt I wrote a very moving letter to the father and mother of Roſino, in which I gave a lively picture of my deſperate ſituation, imploring them to ſnatch me from it, for the ſake of that ſon whoſe memory was equally dear to me as to themſelves. Kaſné, through the medium of a ſlave, conveyed this letter to the hands of a religious belonging to the *Redemption*, who promiſed he would ſend it immediately, but without knowing it treated of any other matter than merely to propoſe a common ranſom. He ſpoke of it to Mouſlouf, who pretending he had an opportunity to forward it that day, took the charge of doing ſo upon himſelf; how well he performed his truſt will be eaſily conceived. When the time had elapſed which ſhould have brought me an anſwer from Italy my impatience changed to deſperation—Mouſlouf, to drive away even the ſhadow of hope from my mind, told me inſultingly, that if I depended for my ranſam on the generoſity of my huſband's parents I had ſmall reaſon to give myſelf the airs of a free woman.—"It is little likely," ſaid he taunt-

ingly,

ingly, "they ſhould redeem my ſlave, who is almoſt a ſtranger to them, for the felicity of maintaining her after they have laid out their money in the wiſdom of ſuch a purchaſe."

This and ſimilar ſtrokes of his cruelty I repeated to Kaſné, who renewed her vows to procure my liberty, though it ſhould coſt her whatever ſhe poſſeſſed in the world; yet, with all her ardent endeavours to keep up my ſpirits, the little probability I could foreſee of her ſucceeding preyed upon them, and at laſt flung me into a violent fit of ſickneſs. Kaſné availed herſelf of my indiſpoſition to ſoften the heart of her huſband; her redoubled efforts to pleaſe him were accompanied with the moſt tender reproaches; he had always loved her—he was flattered with her expreſſions of a paſſion which even his prepoſſeſſion for another had not been able to render leſs violent—he gazed on her with complacency—he wiſhed to forget me—and the better to accompliſh his prudent purpoſe, he ſat out for Algiers to ſettle with his merchants a buſineſs that would engage him for a conſiderable time—My friend rejoiced at

his

his abſence; and when ſhe communicated to me that I ſhould no longer be ſubject to his caprices, the good news very much aſſiſted my recovery. To complete my better proſpects, Mouſlouf had but juſt left Tunis when the humane Aly arrived once more at the port, having taken conſiderable prizes—he did not care to leave ſo many valuable effects on board his ſhip; at leaſt that part of them which belonged to his partner he thought would be more ſafe in the cuſtody of Mouſlouf's wife, and to her he ſent them: ſhe was raviſhed at the ſight of ſo great riches—ſhe ran to me in a tranſport of ecſtaſy—

"Dear, worthy, virtuous Chriſtian," ſhe cried, tears and embraces preceding her words, "I come now to keep my promiſe—I come to give you freedom—behold the wealth I carry in my hands; it ſhall be conſecrated, all conſecrated to purchaſe your ranſom—If I rob Mouſlouf it is to enſure your felicity, and our Prophet will not frown on a fraud ſo pious."

She then explained the lucky chance to which ſhe owed her power of releaſing me—I fell at her feet—my joy was too big for expreſſion, yet I made her ſenſible of my gratitude and eternal friendſhip; nor was my gratification leſſened by the conſideration that I was to be bought from Mouſlouf with his own money. Kaſné, the moſt ſenſible as well as moſt amiable woman in the world, took upon herſelf the whole management of my affairs; with the utmoſt privacy ſhe remitted ten thouſand *francs* to a Spaniſh merchant, of whoſe probity ſhe was well aſſured, beſeeching him to place it in the hands of a *Pere de la Redemption*, that is to ſay, a religious of the ſame order with him to whom I had entruſted the care of my poor unfortunate letter to the parents of Roſino. Kaſné requeſted of her confidant to tell the prieſt when he delivered him the money, that it was intended for the ranſom of Mouſlouf's ſlave named *Fuſtina*, the only one by which I was known in the family of my maſter. The kind merchant performed her commiſſion with exactneſs; he gave her wealth to the Religious, who conveyed it to his cell, where he preſerved it in ſafety till the return of its

right

right owner. Kaſné was not miſtaken when ſhe ſuppoſed the offer of ten thouſand francs would ſhake the firm reſolves of her avaricious huſband; ſhe had laid our plans with all poſſible caution to enſure ſucceſs — I had many fears, ſhe but one; it was that Aly would diſcover to his aſſociate the riches he had ſent to his houſe: but we were ſoon delivered from the dread of this horrible intervention by Aly's ſetting out on a new voyage before Mouſlouf put himſelf into the trap his wife had with ſo much ſkill prepared for him—Nothing could equal the terrors of uncertainty we experienced, when, after an abſence of two months, our tyrant came back to Tunis more in love than ever, and determined, as we thought, to get the better of my ſcruples one way or the other.—Kaſné was with him, ſo was I, when the Religious, with the money in his hands, came to treat for my ranſom. He began adroitly, by propoſing a very ſmall ſum.

"No," ſaid Mouſlouf contemptuouſly, "you may carry your pitiful purſe to another market."

The Religious conſidered a moment, then made a ſmall addition to his offers, but without preſſing him to accept them.—He ſhook his head—a little farther augmentation was propoſed—he waved his hand to ſignify that he abſolutely rejected the propoſition—Thus proceeded the barter for poor trembling me, till by degrees my price mounted up to ſix thouſand francs, but this ſum was alſo inſufficient to unſettle the paſſion Mouſlouf had conceived for me: at laſt the Religious ſtopped at ten thouſand, declaring he would advance no farther.—Kaſné and I looked on each other—it was a moment between life and death for us both—whilſt the horrid eyes of the Turk were fixed ſolely on me, and ſpoke a language which might have perſuaded one he had two armies combating in his ſoul, one commanded by avarice, the other by luſt; ſometimes he glanced from the corner of an eye towards the gold which the Religious had wiſely ſpread before him in all its attractions; this was a ſtroke of policy, a maſter-piece of generalſhip not to be reſiſted—Mouſlouf drew nearer to the ſplendid offering—he looked—he touched—he handled it—counted it—avarice gained a complete victory—

victory—he marched off with my ranſom, and I was declared free. Kaſné caught me in her arms, ſhe embraced me with the affection of a ſiſter: it was love for me, and not becauſe ſhe was going to get rid of a rival, that ſhe expreſſed theſe emotions: "Ah! how grateful were my feelings—with what tenderneſs did I repay her careſſes." This was our laſt interview; when, to complete her goodneſs, knowing how ill I was provided with money, ſhe forced a very large ſum on my acceptance, which ſhe only called a ſufficiency to ſupply the neceſſaries for my voyage, though in fact it deſerved to be named a proviſion for the comforts of a long life: the grief I felt at parting with this dear benevolent friend, equalled my joy at being releaſed from bondage. She too was overwhelmed with ſadneſs; we did not, we could not bid each other adieu for ever, the words expired on our lips—we ſeparated in ſilence, and I went home with the *Religious*, where were ſome other women ſlaves, newly delivered like myſelf, but not by means ſo improbable—with theſe companions I embarked on board a Spaniſh veſſel going to Barcelona; we had a fortunate navigation, and arrived in port

without having encountered either impediment or accident.

We entered the ſtreets of Barcelona in proceſſion, as is the cuſtom for Europeans to do, who are returned from captivity—the whole way was crowded, even to the tops of the houſes, with inquiſitive ſpectators, who expreſſed ſuch eagerneſs in their looks, as if every one of them expected to find in the faces they examined the features of a friend who had been miſſing; this could not really be the caſe with them all, yet one circumſtance did happen, curious enough to occupy a ſhare in my medley of adventures:—A young ſlave who walked by my ſide, named Nuguis, attracted more than any other general obſervation; at laſt a cry was raiſed amongſt the multitude, which ſoon became univerſal, and filled me with alarm: thoſe who were near, preſſed nearer—thoſe at a diſtance run forward, to aſk a thouſand queſtions, crying out, "It is he—it is his very ſelf.——Ah! poor Pedro Carlos! Nuguis lives, and thou haſt ſuffered unjuſtly."—— Theſe were all the words I could collect from the ſpreading buz of diſcontent, which increaſing

creaſing to a great noiſe, at laſt reached the ears of a police magiſtrate, who either to quell the tumult, or to know what occaſioned it, carried us before a judge, whither the people ruſhed alſo, like a torrent of waters, not to be repreſſed. Here he was interrogated as to the identity of his name, his country, and kindred; his anſwers coincided with the ideas taken up by the mob, who ſupported him on all ſides. The judge with a troubled countenance lifted up his eyes—I obſerved they were full of tears; he withdrew precipitately, as if to avoid the murmurs of an enraged populace, who called him the murderer of Pedro Carlos—that man, whoſe fate ſeemed to inſpire every ſpectator with the deepeſt regret.

"This unjuſt judge," ſaid one of the moſt irritated, "has nothing to ſay in his own defence; had he ſearched into the affair before he took the life of our poor countryman, he might have been an object of pity; whereas, from his haſte to ſhed blood, he only deſerves our vengeance."

Another more dispassionate observed, that strong proofs were brought forward at the trial of Pedro Carlos, which ought to acquit the judge of injustice, when he pronounced the sentence of his death; in short, there were no two opinions that were likely to tally, till it was proposed for them to convey Nuguis to the house of the wretch who had sold him to the corsairs of Tunis; a proposition against which there was not one dissenting voice—but in vain this unanimity, the villain who heard Nuguis was returned, had already escaped from the punishment he dreaded, which, in proportion to the enormity of his crime, must have been terrible.

Nothing but this occurrence was talked of through the city of Barcelona, and my curiosity never rested till I had gained the particulars on which it was founded, and which I am going to recite.

Nuguis and Pedro Carlos were intimate friends from childhood. Pedro married a beautiful wife, but soon perceived Nuguis was as sensible of her charms as himself; he broke with his friend; they became mortal enemies

enemies—and from this time were heard to threaten each other with all the bitterness of rivalship; nor did his wife escape displeasure, he loaded her with reproaches for the too great satisfaction with which she received the gallantries of Nuguis. Nothing is more common in Italy or Spain than to revenge affronted honour, without running any personal risk; which made those menaces uttered by Pedro Carlos against his wife's lover the more recognizable: indeed they were the fatal cause of a very melancholy catastrophe! by confirming a rational suspicion, that Pedro had assassinated Nuguis, though in fact it was the furthest from reality. Another inhabitant of Barcelona, named Mendoca, was also the slave of passion, and burnt for the wife of Pedro: this third man was a villain of the worst order; he hid his wickedness under so specious an appearance, that those who knew him best were the last to suspect him of a base action—his desires for the wife, though violent to an extreme, he imprisoned in his own bosom, slily waiting for an opportunity to indulge it at his ease, and the quarrel between Pedro and Nuguis seemed

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to hold out the occaſion for which he lay in wait; he ſeized on it with infernal avidity—no crime could preſent itſelf too black for his execution. Nuguis ſuddenly diſappeared—all Barcelona were in an uproar, and nobody ſcrupled to declare that Pedro muſt have aſſaſſinated the miſſing citizen, for whom they made the moſt diligent, yet unprofitable ſearch; the public voice announced Pedro to have been the murderer of Nuguis: was he not his enemy? the more mortally ſo, for having once been his friend. This was a plea nobody thought proper to defend: he was therefore taken up, caſt into priſon, and in the midſt of tortures, ſhocking to reflect on, to eaſe himſelf from them he avowed a crime of which he was innocent; when, as the reward of his candour, he was mercifully condemned to ſuffer inſtant death, which ſentence was executed, though as ſoon as taken from the rack, he retracted the whole of his forced confeſſion. . . . . Alas! the ſame hearts that I now ſaw ſo exquiſitely touched by his miſerable fate, were then hardened againſt him.

Mendoca

Mendoca having delivered himſelf from his two rivals, began to make the beſt of his perfidy, and found it no difficult taſk to repay himſelf in the arms of Pedro's coquetiſh wife, for the trouble of ſending her lover into ſlavery, and her huſband to another world. He wore the maſk of religion—he pretended to be a devotee—he had been a vile renegade—he had made ſcandalous depredations in Africa—he was well known by the corſairs who inveſt the Mediterranean—he had travelled all over Europe—his character was every where better underſtood than in his own country; from moſt others he had been baniſhed, becauſe he took no care but at home to conceal the blackneſs of his heart. His principal commerce in Spain was trading with pirates, and to one of them he ſold Nuguis, not doubting that Pedro would be put to death for the ſuppoſed murder; the manner in which he was entrapped Nuguis thus accounted for—Mendoca ſought his acquaintance—profeſſed the higheſt eſteem for his character—execrated his enemy:——Pedro paid him a thouſand obliging civilities, by which means they ſoon became on the moſt intimate footing, always together on the

the water, or on the land: on one of the former excurſions the rowers being corrupted by Mendoca, put out to ſea; where a corſair, trained there by the ſame perfidious contriver, waited for them; and ſending out an armed boat full of men, Nuguis, in ſpite of the utmoſt reſiſtance he could make, was forced on board, whilſt the villain who betrayed him ſtood laughing at his miſery, and wiſhing him all manner of ſucceſs in the country for which he was bound.

Having thus diſpoſed of Nuguis, he returned to Barcelona, where the execution of Pedro Carlos ſoon followed; his riches recommended him to the widow; ſhe ſuffered him to dry up her tears for one huſband, by giving her another: afterwards he formed the project of quitting Spain, the execution of which deſign was haſtened by the unexpected return of Nuguis. The judges being appriſed of the detail I recount, they would have done any thing to repair the injuſtice of their ſentence on poor Pedro Carlos, but all they could do was to take away, by a public act, the odium that had been innocently caſt on his character.



During

During my ſhort ſtay at Barcelona I balanced in my mind whether I ſhould go to Italy, and reclaim my fortune from the family of Roſino, or return to my own country.—"My father and mother-in-law," ſaid I to myſelf, "may give me an unwelcome reception; their adored ſon is no longer my protector—his parents may probably regard me as a mere ſtranger, in whom they are no more intereſted; beſides, they may conſider my viſit founded on mercenary views.—No! I will never demand my dower from them—I will not go to diſturb their tranquillity—the ſight of Roſino's wife would afflict them—to ſee the father and mother of Roſino would kill me. I wept at the idea, and reſolved on going back to Flanders, there to ſettle myſelf quietly—there to renew thoſe inquiries after my mother, which a chain of unforeſeen events had ſo long procraſtinated. I immediately prepared for my voyage; I was come to the ſhip ſide, and ready to ſtep on board, when, dreadful to relate, I was arreſted by order of the Inquiſition; the officer who delivered the mandate for my return to the city, bade me walk before him.

"Walk!"

"Walk!" cried I, in a fright never to be forgotten; "my God! I am not able to ſtand!" and I ſaid true, ſo great was my horror, ſo violent the trembling that ſeized me at the thoughts of appearing before that tribunal, where ſo much guiltleſs blood is drawn from innocent victims. Shameful zeal of a religion, whoſe chief loveliness ought to conſiſt in gentleneſs of mercy, in liberality of ſentiment.

The man ſeeing I was really not able to ſtand, cauſed two of his company to bear me between them; and the hole to which they carried me was ſo ſmall, that I could neither ſit or lay down, or make any movement from the poſition into which they thruſt me. Here then, in torments unutterable, I paſſed the whole of a tedious night, and part of the next day, when I was taken out, more dead than alive, to anſwer before my judges.

"Of what crime are you accuſed?" aſked one of the Inquiſitors.

"I ſup-

"I ſuppoſe," I replied, haughtily, "you are better informed of my crime, than I who have committed no crime can pretend to be. I deſire, therefore, to be told what I have done deſerving the puniſhment, that by your orders has been inflicted on my defenceleſs ſex, and unimpeached reputation. This anſwer was too ſpirited, it was not ſuch as I ought to have made. The right reverend monk turned from me with diſguſt, and haſtily retired: but one of his aſſiſtants charitably rebuked my imprudence, telling me that it was not only neceſſary I ſhould declare my fault, but alſo become my own accuſer, without endeavouring to find out who had informed againſt me. After this ſalutary advice I was conducted back to the hole I before occupied, where I was ſhut up for another twenty-four hours as painful as the firſt—I hope there are no ears to whom my complaints would be muſical, for which reaſon I do not re-utter them; when for a few ſeconds I could forget my grief, it was only to bring before my mind all that I had ſaid, done, or almoſt thought, ſince I left Tunis, without finding any thing recorded

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on my retentive memory of which I thought it poſſible for malice itſelf to make out an accuſation againſt me; till at laſt I happily recollected a circumſtance, that from its want of importance I had failed to regiſter—it was this: a huge, thickſet, ſapleſs, ſquint-eyed monk ſailed with us from Tunis to Barcelona; he had not once condeſcended to ſhew himſelf pleaſed with me as long as we continued together in the ſame ſhip. He thought himſelf very wiſe in matters of religion; and, ignorant as I am, I ventured to diſpute with him—I delighted to confound him in his own arguments—I beſieged him with continual raillery, in contradiction of his manifold abſurdities—I often made him a ſubject of ridicule to the other paſſengers, without meaning any thing but to indulge the harmleſs gaiety of my diſpoſition, which had been too long over-clouded by melancholy; once in particular I very much offended him, and now that I recollected the circumſtance, I could not but conſider it as the cauſe of my preſent confinement; he one day drew me in to talk of my adventures in the houſe of Mouſlouf, of my frequent interviews with

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the Iman who had undertaken my conversion; a sneer of malice, added to the deformity of his before ugly visage, when he expressed his wonder that I did not embrace the faith, of which it was evident I had spared no pains to make myself mistress.

"Though," added he, "perhaps your vanity might be hurt by some part of its tenets, Mahomet shews little respect for women, having excluded them one and all from paradise."

"You are mistaken," I replied; "it is women alone who form the paradise of Mahomet; without the Hoaris to gladden the scene Musselmen would consider it no better than a purgatory. Confess now that you was plunged in an error, and that it is I who have drawn you out of it!"

"You know a vast deal," said the Monk, in a severe tone; "but do you understand, with all your wisdom, that the doctrine of Turks declare your sex to be without souls;

that they die like dogs, without hope of rising in another state."

"Much may be said on that point," returned I, archly. "For my own part, were I to put myself at the head of a new-fashioned religious sect, I would not have one monk in my paradise—I would form a separate enclosure for their entertainment, which I would fill with the most beautiful women I could collect, whose charms should vanquish their primitive gravity, force them to be in love, and make them acknowledge their weakness."—The hypocritical Monk pretended to laugh, and called it a comical idea; yet I saw that at the bottom of his heart he was angry at my freedom. I was the more confirmed in this opinion, as he often hinted to me afterwards that I despised him, and he also treated me as if he thought I had no religion at all.

The officers of the Inquisition again dragged me into the presence of my frightful judges; the old question was renewed, who was my accuser, and what was my crime?—

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In answer to the first I named the Monk, and, to illustrate the second, gave them the anecdote I have already repeated. The inquisitor bent his head devoutly, though, I believe in my conscience, it was only to hide the smile he could not suppress; in this stooping attitude he imposed on me a slight reprimand, with a slighter penance for form sake, when, without any more ceremony, I was dismissed to go where I pleased, and, rendering thanks to Heaven for having escaped so well, I hastened from a city filled with vindictive *devots*, whose persecutions might again fall on me if I did not get out of their way. I set out immediately towards Cadiz, meaning to embark there for Holland. As to love, thinking he must have done with me for ever, I did not consult him on my adopted measures; for which reason, no doubt, and to make me once more confess his power, he discomposed them a good deal, by stopping me a considerable time at Madrid. But, before I pursue the thread of my own narrative, I shall relate an instance of virtuous magnanimity, which, having lately happened, interested the whole town, and which well de-

ſerves that it ſhould be tranſmitted to poſterity.

## MEMOIR.

Thereſia, young and beautiful, the daughter of Truxillo, one of the richeſt merchants in Madrid, was beloved by Dieque, like herſelf, an only child, the ſon of a negotiator. The ſingle inequality between theſe young people was the fault of Fortune, not of Nature; the lady had too much wealth, the lover too little—this diſparity, though no obſtacle to love, was an inſurmountable one to Hymen. Truxillo's opulence, as well as his character, were repellants that threw their hopes at a diſtance, holding them froſt bound in the cold atmoſphere of impoſſibility. Verdago, the father of Dieque, came to the ſmall matter he poſſeſſed by inheritance from honourable, but poor progenitors; the father of Thereſia had filled his bags by the inceſſant toil of accumulation, and he uſed his good fortune as people of mean birth generally do, who climb, by chance, above

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their expectations; — that is to ſay, he bore his proſperity with a ſort of haughty arrogance, which is ſure to make many enemies, but never one friend. He deſpiſed the poor, ſo he did every body leſs rich than himſelf. This humour was a ſpecies of indemnification for the inſults he ſometimes encountered from men whoſe origin was better than his own. He applied the balm of wealth to the ſtings of mortification, it never loſt its effect like other medicines; he thought virtue honourable; he fancied he loved virtue, but, after all, nobody would allow that he loved it ſo well as he did his money. Generoſity, amongſt the whole family of virtues, was that on which he ſat the higheſt eſtimation; but he was a melancholy miſanthrope, therefore never exerciſed the liberality he admired, becauſe he believed that no perſon on the face of the earth was really deſerving of his bounty. He would argue by the hour, that there was no ſuch thing as goodneſs in mankind; that whatever was called good, in the beſt of men's conduct, was no more than vice palliated by the vanity of wiſhing to be thought what they were not. He knew he had no friend; he did not deſire to have what

he averred — was never to be found. Men, he would say, seek to destroy each other — what is called friendship is a kind of masked war, where man knocks down man with his face covered; in short, he thought it safer to regard at once every body as his enemy, than to receive their friendship, or misbestow his own with these strange principles.

Truxillo lived retired in the bosom of his family, as a bear does in its den; he attached himself solely to business, whilst the severity with which he carried on his dealings made him detested by all the other merchants who were under the necessity of occasionally transacting their affairs with him.

It may easily be imagined that a misanthrope of this description was not likely to be touched with the love of Dieque for his daughter, any more than by that which his daughter felt for Dieque. He would have looked abroad from East to West, from North to South, till he had found for her a more solid union than one made up of passion, sentiment, and mutual wishes, and

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it was the fear of being separated for ever that threw the bridle of restraint over their expressions, and to love by stealth, though not the less violently for loving in silence.

Verdago adored his son, he looked into the recesses of his heart, and saw, to his sorrow, nothing but the possession of Theresia would make him happy — what is there which a good parent will not do for the felicity of his children? — To bring about that of Dieque, Verdago formed enterprizes perilous in the execution, uncertain in the event. With the flatterer Hope for his pilot, he pursued fortune as if he would have taken her by violence, merely to render his son an equal alliance for the daughter of Truxillo. His projections seemed to realise even beyond his expectations; the ships in which he had interest arrived in port laden with profits; other matters in which he was concerned turned out as well — instead of any longer following Fortune, it appeared as if she had taken him by the hand, and never intended to abandon him. In a very short space of time he began to transact business with the chief merchants, who wondered at his adroit-

neſs, little leſs than at his abundant proſperity: nay, even Truxillo would now let him frequently viſit at his houſe, inviting him to bring Dieque with him, being leſs averſe to that young man's forming an attachment to his daughter, as his father was in a fair way of getting quite as rich as himſelf. Theſe were his ſentiments as long as he ſaw the good luck of Verdago daily augmenting, but they changed with the aſpect of his affairs — cruel was the reverſe, which reduced that excellent parent to his original poverty! — A veſſel richly freighted with valuables, to a vaſt amount, became the prey of corſairs in the Mediterranean; other blows fell upon him from other quarters; the rapidity of his loſſes was greater than that of his gains, and he became a bankrupt — — ſuch is the fate of man, his proſperity may be ſaid to reſemble the mechaniſm of a watch — we are half a minute in winding it up, but break the main ſpring, and it flies back in a ſecond.

Nobody could reproach Verdago with having called down misfortunes on his own head by folly, extravagance, or bad conduct; the

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chance of trade caufed them, and, in all his difficulties, he neither forfeited his probity, his honour, nor his patience. He bore with firmnefs what he could not prevent, and gave up to his creditors the laft fhilling he poffeffed — they loved his virtues, they were perfuaded of his honefty, they defired to make up his affairs, all who were connected with him ran to offer the fame affiftance; they agreed amongft themfelves that he fhould again enter into bufinefs; it only remained with one creditor to oppofe the arrangement, this creditor was Truxillo, to whom he owed a vaft debt, and he would yield to no fort of compofition. It was in vain that the unlucky trader fpoke to him, with all the humility bad fortune is apt to infpire, that he entreated his mercy to a poor fufferer, blamelefs, though unfortunate.

"I believe," faid he, "that your being a bankrupt is the effect of accident, not of imprudence; yet I am refolved to do nothing for you, unlefs the friends, of whom you fancy you have fo many, difcharges my demands on your eftate."

Verdago

Verdago, though well acquainted with the temper of Truxillo, could ſcarce give credit to a propoſition ſo mercenary--it is true he could have paid this unfeeling creditor with the money others, in their bounty, had advanced, who gave it to him for the abſolute purpoſe of applying it to the uſes of buſineſs: he, therefore, told himſelf he had no right to diſpoſe of it in any other manner, and returned to every man what he now conſidered as a loan, and patiently occupied the apartment in a priſon which Truxillo had taken care to provide for his reception.

Dieque, diſtracted by ſorrow no leſs deep, but more lively than that which preyed on the ſoul of his father, flung himſelf at the knees of this ſevere enemy, and tried to touch him with pity, but he remained inflexible.

"Since neither entreaties, nor prayers, nor tears, can move your compaſſion," ſaid this illuſtrious ſon of a reſpectable father, "yet there is one favour, which perhaps you will not refuſe—grant me but this one, and I will acquit you of all others."

Truxillo

Truxillo nodded his head, it was a ſort of ſignal for him to make known his requeſt.

"It is not," proceeded Dieque, "the unconditional liberty of my father I would ſolicit; I aſk only that you give him his freedom on condition that I take his place in the priſon."—Here the ſad ſpirit of the pleader nearly failed him; he ſaw Truxillo turn his head round upon his ſhoulder, and heard him give a whiſtle, which indicated no very flattering preſage; yet he continued his implorings.—"Oh, Sir!" ſaid he, "conſider that in deſiring the liberty of my venerable father, I aſk nothing that can prejudice your intereſt; on the contrary, by retaining my perſon inſtead of his, it will be the means of inſuring the payment of the debt he owes you. . . . Young as I am, without a guide, without experience, is it poſſible that I ſhould conduct the affairs of my father, which are ſo greatly entangled? . . . He loves me beyond himſelf; let him be free, confine me in his place, and he will never reſt day or night till he has ſatisfied your demands, and reſtored me to the boſom of his family!---Ah, Sir! for Heaven's ſake, let

me

me be his hostage, and take my life if he should fail to fulfil a tittle of the engagement for which I make myself responsible!"

"Pish!" cried Truxillo, half turning away, "I never heard the like of this!"—then shifting about as suddenly—"do you expect, young man, that I should commission you directly to release your father, and put yourself into his situation?"

"I fervently desire it!" replied the other, modestly.

"Well, then," said the merchant, "I will in part gratify your wishes. . . Go, take your father out of prison, bring him hither, but return with him—for understand, my boy, I have greater designs against your liberty than you suspect.—I think you love my daughter, I know she loves you—I will unite you to each other—I will have for my son-in-law the noblest youth in Madrid, in Spain, or in the whole universe!"——Dieque fell at the feet of his generous benefactor, astonishment choaked his voice, joy rushed in torrents from his eyes; he only hoped to

ransom

ranſom the parent he loved — he received the promiſe of a wife he adored, it was too much, it nearly bereaved him of his ſenſes. When reſtored to ſpeech and action, Truxillo would not truſt him to go alone to the priſon; he went with him, he embraced Verdago, declared him free without any other conditions than giving him a ſon, and receiving from him a daughter. — How flat would it feel, on the palate of Senſibility, to be told what were the old man's emotions on ſo wonderful a tranſition: the ſame objection does not prevent my ſerving up the laſt beſt fruit which virtue had prepared for the regale of her votaries. — — Nobody will think it inſipid to be told that the hands of Dieque and Thereſia were united, on which occaſion all Madrid rejoiced with them, nor did any of its inhabitants withhold from Truxillo the praiſes his generoſity deſerved; his former blemiſhes were all forgotten, and ſo great is the glory of a good action, that every body ſaw in his manners a new grace that was reflected from the honour of his conduct.

It

It was in the town of which I have been speaking that I often met with the son of that famous Jean d'Older Barneveldt, who, after rendering the United Provinces so many distinguished services, as entitled him to the devotion of the whole state, and after a long disagreement with Maurice de Naussau, Prince of Orange, instead of having his head crowned with laurels, lost it by violence at the age of seventy-two. The son of this great man was generous, rich, handsome, full of vivacity — saw me, loved me, and told me so in a manner so tender, so respectful, that the same sentiment I had felt for Rosino, on our first acquaintance, again seemed to revive from the ashes of apathy, which the death of that ever-beloved husband had strewed over the liveliness of my affections, never lighted into a flame by any eyes but his own, till I began to find some danger in contemplating those of Monsieur de Barneveldt. — I wished to defend my heart — but how defend it from the approaches of a man every way so amiable? I thought of the immense disparity in our fortunes, I thought of the Countess de ****, when she refused the hand

hand of her charming lover, my dear Parent of the Forest, because she would not injure him. I had always admired the delicacy of her conduct, and now I determined to make it the rule of my own.

Monsieur de Barneveldt seemed to have but one object in view, that of pleasing me. He certainly succeeded much beyond what I would give him leave to suppose, because I religiously guarded my secret, and would not let him perceive the impression his assiduities had made on my heart; he supposed I was blind to his merit, indifferent to his passion — Heaven knows with how little justice he accused me. I sometimes talked to him on the subject of his family; any thing was better, in my opinion, than letting him speak to me of his love.

"I cannot but think," said I, one day as we walked together in a beautiful garden, "I cannot but think myself a favourite of Fortune, who has conducted my steps to the only place where I could have met a descendant of Jean de Barneveldt, a name so

well

well known, ſo highly honoured, throughout Europe!"

"Ah!" replied he, in a tone of reproach, "were theſe obliging ſentiments expreſſed for me inſtead of another—had you thanked Fortune for bringing us together on *my* account, with what rapture would I have bleſſed your condeſcenſion!"

"I ſhould be very ungrateful," I replied, with as much indifference as I could counterfeit, "not to confeſs that I am ſenſible of your politeneſs, and I ſhall call myſelf ſtill more your debtor on the ſame ſcore, if you will have the goodneſs to inform me of thoſe anecdotes reſpecting the fate of your patriotic father, in which I am at preſent but very ill inſtructed."

"I ſhall certainly obey your commands," ſaid he, with a mortified air. "You talk of gratitude—you talk of politeneſs—however ſevere theſe expreſſions to a heart that will not be ſatisfied with *gratitude*, that means in its attachment to you more than

*politeneſs*

*politeneſs* — however your coldneſs diſtreſſes me — however cruel you are, I ſhall take ſome conſolation in giving you a painful proof of my obedience.

"Jean de Barneveldt, my father, was penſioner, that is to ſay miniſter, to the provinces of Holland; he rendered many ſervices of the moſt ſingular nature to his country; it was his too great zeal for the preſervation of its liberties that created him an enemy in Maurice de Naſſau, Prince of Orange, whoſe powers he thought too broad, and for that reaſon endeavoured to limit them, as well as to ſet bounds to his ambition. Henry the Fourth of France and Elizabeth of England eſteemed my father as a man in whom were centered uprightneſs, policy, prudence, and activity, who muſt poſſeſs every requiſite of an able miniſter, being employed on embaſſies of the firſt importance to the Republic; in ſhort, his experience in politics outſtripped example; a quality ſo eſſential to the character of good ſtateſmen, that without it the beſt inclinations as well as the beſt theoretical judgement will often adopt wrong meaſures for want of knowing the intricacies of that

path which they never before gave themſelves the trouble to explore. Notwithſtanding the Prince of Orange made all poſſible reſiſtance to the council of Jean de Barneveldt, a treaty was concluded between Holland and the Arch-Duke; he alſo prevented the States General from taking any part in the war of Bohemia: by this ſtroke he again thwarted the Prince, who wiſhed to engage in it, becauſe peace did not agree with his pride, or contribute to his grandeur; nor would he ever pardon in my father the preſumption with which he oppoſed his inclinations.—Not long after his highneſs had received theſe wholeſome checks there aroſe a religious diſpute throughout the United Provinces, which put bad thoughts into his head to be revenged of a faithful miniſter, whoſe piety was too orthodox, whoſe wiſdom was much too ſolid not to deteſt the *outrée* opinions of certain theologians, who named themſelves *Gomariſtes*, or counter *Remonſtrators*; thoſe people held out a ſyſtem of predeſtination, by which God is repreſented not as a merciful creator whoſe works are dear to him, but a tyrannic judge, predetermined on the deſtruction of all who are not

ſealed

ſealed for redemption, even before they are ſent into the world: they allow nothing to the will of the creature; he is either born to be happy, which no crimes of his own can prevent, or to an eternity of miſery, which the beſt virtues he is able to exerciſe cannot retard. What man of underſtanding could poſſibly lean towards opinions ſo overrun with abſurdities? My father embraced the more moderate ſentiments of the Armenians, or *Remonſtrators*, which are conformable to reaſon and the Scriptures, which do not profane the Deity by diveſting him of his attributes, or tear off the robe of mercy in which he has cloathed the greatneſs of his powers to veil him in imaginary terrors.—The great *Melanchton*, though long before my father, had adopted the ſame mild religious tenets; and when this new diſſenſion firſt began to blaze out, there were few men of ſenſe who did not either privately or publicly eſteem them, yet theſe, however, were by far the ſmalleſt number; at the head of the larger was the Prince himſelf—my father being an Armenian and tolerant, he found, under the pretence of conſcience, a good occaſion to play off the vengeance he meditated againſt him.

—In 1618 he held the famous convocation of Dordrecht, where the whole ſect of Armenians were ſolemnly condemned by its proſtituted members. It happened on this occaſion, as it always muſt happen with little minds who ſee the tide of fortune faſt ebbing from the ſource of their dependance, that my father ſoon found himſelf forſaken by moſt of his party; that he was more ſuſpected, more watched, more odious than ever to the enemies of liberty, to the friends of deſpotiſm, and to the creatures of the Prince. His highneſs, profiting by the diſpoſition in his favour, cauſed the man whom he moſt hated, together with the celebrated *Grotius* and *Hoogerbeetſy*, under the falſe accuſation of conſpiracy, to be arreſted and thrown into priſon: the particular ſpecies of treaſon laid to their charge was a deſign to barter with Spain for the United Provinces, as well as for having negociated with France to put into its hands the ſovereignty of the Low Countries; for theſe ſuppoſitious crimes every paper in the poſſeſſion of my father underwent the ſtricteſt examination, but nothing was produced by the inquiry to ſubſtantiate the evidence which had been maliciouſly

ciouſly brought againſt him; ſo that the whole charge of treaſonable intentions wanted a foundation, and did not bear the ſtamp of truth even in appearance."

Here Monſieur de Barneveldt interrupted himſelf; he perſuaded me the evening damps were deſcending, and beſtowed ſo much tender conſideration to preſerve my health, that whatever curioſity ſuffered from delaying the intereſting memoir, my heart found its recompenſe in the ſweet aſſiduities that occaſioned it. I teſtified my impatience for him to continue the charming ſubject; he ſaid he would breakfaſt with me the next morning: —he was as good as his word, and it is certain, whatever I had pretended of impatience to hear more of Jean de Barneveldt, Monſieur, his ſon, during our repaſt, contrived to ſay ſo many pleaſant things for himſelf, that, to ſpeak truth, I had almoſt forgot the poor old gentleman, till the young one forced me to remember him, by ſome paſſionate exclamations which I did not know how to anſwer, my affections and my reaſon being juſt then very much at variance; all I had therefore to do was to parry a too dangerous

attack made on the former, by insisting that he should recommence the narrative of his family—he, I fancy, saw nothing very severe in my features when I gave him this command, and I think so because he obeyed it without murmuring.

"My father," said he, "in the beginning of his confinement published a defence of his conduct, refuting the crimes with which he had been charged, denying them solemnly, and laying the woes of his country on those violent ecclesiastics whose rash zeal against the Armenians had thrown the states into confusion, and reduced himself to a prison for an offence amounting to no more than his having embraced the part of moderation rather than the fanatism of counter *Remonstrators*.

"During the continuance of these religious disputes, Louis the Thirteenth of France thought himself obliged to interfere; he sent an extraordinary ambassador to the Hague, commissioned to remonstrate with the States General on the unreasonableness of endeavouring to penetrate into the predestination of grace to the prejudice of more established

bliſhed opinions, and much better founded: beſides this meſſage, he was alſo charged to intereſt himſelf for my father, and to demand his enlargement; all which he diligently performed, but to very little purpoſe; the States returned their moſt humble thanks to Louis, King of France, for the part he was pleaſed to take in their affairs, but their affairs continued exactly in the ſame ſituation as before, and my father was ſhut up in his ſmall priſon as cloſely as ever, rather worſe treated; for now he was denied the uſe of pens, ink, or paper, and remained in abſolute ignorance of every thing that was paſſing beyond the boundaries of his dungeon. He would have gone on much longer in this hard condition if, by the indefatigable attempts of my mother, ſhe had not at laſt found means to let him know certain occurrences neceſſary for him to underſtand: ſhe alſo conveyed to him materials for writing.—The commiſſioners named for trying the three priſoners were, of all other men, thoſe who declared againſt them with the greateſt animoſity; —my mother did not ſtifle her reſentment— ſhe complained loudly of injuſtice—ſhe carried her complaints before the Eſtates of

Holland—ſhe expreſſed the ſurpriſe and horror with which their nomination of judges had filled her—ſhe beſought them to exchange the men they had choſen for others leſs partially the enemies of her huſband; but her entreaties were rejected with ſcorn. —The Prince of Orange, in changing the magiſtrates of the town, as well as in the arreſt of my father and his two companions, had acted illegally, invaded the privileges of the people, and trampled on the rights of the nation; this bold ſtroke had a contrary effect from what might have been expected; it diſpenſed terror every where—no perſon dared to ſpeak in favour of thoſe laws and that liberty for the eſtabliſhment of which they had ſo long combated and ſpilt their beſt blood without repining.

"Every one of our family united in framing, alſo in preſenting, a petition, ſetting forth the melancholy ſtate of an old man, ſeventy-two years of age, nothing culpable, who, after ſerving the Republic with fidelity upwards of forty years, was now ſuffered to languiſh in a dungeon, there to ſuffer ſuch inflictions as were due only to

traitors

traitors and rebels.—Theſe remonſtrances produced no other effect than to prove that the inveterate foes of Jean de Barneveldt were reſolved to criminate him; he was brought before his predetermined judges; the interrogations they put to him were vague, confuſed, captious, and would have fallen into contradictions, had they not preſumed on the fallibility of his memory, and inſtead of allowing him to read his anſwers, for which he was prepared, according to an ancient cuſtom, forced him to make only verbal replies, by which management he could neither explain, contradict, nor ſet them right; they not only wilfully miſtook all he ſaid, but attributed to him what he never ſaid. Within a few days after his trial they viſited his priſon, to announce the ſentence of death to which they had formally condemned him.

"My father, firm in his own innocence, but ſhocked at their injuſtice, cried out, 'Is it *thus* that you treat a good citizen?'—In a moment he re-aſſumed his placidity, demanded pen, ink, and paper, that he might write to my mother, and ſend her his laſt adieu—nobody thought proper to refuſe his requeſt; he

he wrote to her—his letter contained proteſtations of his ever having ſerved the Prince of Orange with fidelity—that he had equally devoted his labours to the intereſt of the States General, to the Provinces of Holland in particular—he conjured her to rely for conſolation on that God who knew the ſecrets of all hearts, who knew his innocence, who would one day take upon himſelf to execute righteous judgement on his oppreſſors.

"Maurice, whoſe revenge was never to be ſatisfied, offered new indignities, unworthy of a prince; he ſent information by Count Guillaume, governor of Friſe, to the Princeſs Dowager of Orange, that he was ſurpriſed the family of De Barneveldt had not, through the channel of her intereſt, entreated that mercy might be ſhewn to the offender. The Princeſs did not fail to make this ſeemingly gracious intimation known to my mother, who, after conſulting her huſband and friends on the propoſition, replied, that by no means would ſhe condeſcend to purchaſe mercy at the expence of truth; ſhe would not, even to preſerve the life of Jean de Barneveldt, falſify his honour. He was no offender, and

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if he muſt ſuffer, it would be for his virtues, not for his offences.—Such were her reaſons for not profitting by the Princeſs's interference.

"My father employed the eccleſiaſtic ſent to prepare him for death, on a meſſage to the Prince of Orange, by which he aſſured him of unſtained fidelity, in maintaining his rights of affection ſincere and ardent for his perſon; he ſupplicated for his pardon in whatever he might have had the ill fortune to diſpleaſe him, and beſought him to ſhew mercy on his family.

"His highneſs pretended to take a part in the afflictions of his old ſervant; he even called up tears to his eyes whilſt he bid the meſſenger tell him he was very ſorry for the condition to which he had reduced himſelf—that he had always loved him—that he had often adviſed him to behave otherwiſe—and at laſt he aſked the eccleſiaſtic, whether De Barneveldt had not commiſſioned him to entreat for his forgiveneſs? He replied No, and left his preſence.

My

"My father's principal regret at leaving the world arose from his seeing men placed in the government without talents, without experience—'After my death,' would he say, 'these heedless ministers will have the conduct of every thing—alas! my poor country! what will then become of you?' He enquired of the priest if Grotius and Hoogerbeetsy were also to die; who told him he believed they would likewise suffer.

'That is a great misfortune,' returned the venerable old man, 'because they are yet capable of doing the state service—as for me, I am aged and useless.'

"De Maurier, ambassador from France, having learnt the sentence of my father, demanded an audience of the States General, but was refused: he then wrote to them, strongly representing the services of him they had condemned, neither did they pay any attention to his letter; which contempt so much displeased Louis, that he sent them word he highly disapproved the cruelty of their proceedings, and as greatly resented their want of respect to the interference of

his

his miniſter, who in all his undertakings was ſanctioned by his authority, and acted under the poſitive directions of his prince.

"Notwithſtanding this laſt effort to ſave the life of my father, nothing tranſpired to him but the ſentence of his death, and the confiſcation of his whole fortune.

"Alas!" cried he, when it was read to him in form, "alas! my country—is this the only recompence I am to reap for a ſervitude of forty years? If you reſpect not my life—ſurely, ſurely, you might have taken my family to your protection. Where is your glory in reducing them to ſhame and to poverty?"

"After making this exclamation, he quietly prepared himſelf for the ſtroke of death.—He walked with an air of tranquillity towards the ſcaffold that had been raiſed in the court of his priſon—he mounted it without once changing countenance: he next turned to the ſide where ſtood the people, whom he addreſſed with a dignity of manner, and

firmneſs

firmneſs of voice, the moſt awful—the moſt expreſſive.

"Fellow citizens!" he ſaid, "in this moment of fate I call Heaven to witneſs, that I am no traitor—I have lived a good member of the States, and I die a man of honour!"—he then fell on his knees, prayed fervently for a ſhort time—got up again with a cheerful air—employed his own hands to pull the bonnet over his eyes, and with one ſtroke of the axe."——

Here my emotions, which had before only vented themſelves in tears that had long ſilently trickled down my cheeks, became at the cloſe of this horrible relation ſo totally ungovernable, that at the word axe, when I could almoſt fancy I ſaw it falling on the neck of his father, I gave a violent ſcream, which fortunately for us both occaſioned a ſhort interruption; till now I had hardly ventured to look upon the amiable ſon of this unfortunate father — Good God! what is there of expreſſion in miſery, which I did not read in his eyes at the moment my own encountered them. We could neither of us

ſpeak.

ſpeak. I held out my hand to him in ſympathy, he miſtook it for affection. Ah! it was no miſtake, and he preſſed it with tenderneſs to his boſom.

We parted for a few hours to regain our tranquillity, which would have only been the more diſturbed had we remained together—when we met again our griefs were mellowed, and he was able to finiſh his narrative with the ſame manly graces that had accompanied him from the beginning of it.

"Whilſt," ſaid he, "I eternally cheriſh the memory of the beſt, the wiſeſt, the moſt faithful, the moſt active of mankind, I will no more return you to that criſis of his fate, the repreſentation of which has already coſt your ſenſibility too many pangs: I ſhall only conclude what I have yet to ſay of my father, by quoting the words of that ancient, who had good reaſon for his obſervation, when he ſaid—'Que le crime d'etet eſt bien ſouvent le crime de ceux que n'en ont point commis.' At the time when this revolution happened to our family, my brother and ſelf were yet young; nevertheleſs, of

ſufficient

ſufficient age to reſent the injuſtice by which we ſuffered, and we reſolved to revenge it on the firſt occaſion that ſhould preſent itſelf. In 1623, four years after the ſlaughter of my father, I ſaid to my mother it was now time we ſhould take upon us to reſcue his memory from the obliquy by which it was diſgraced, and to think of what we owed to ourſelves. I repreſented to her, that the Prince of Orange had been our deſtruction, as well as the deſtroyer of her huſband, who, not contented with taking his life, ſtill kept in his own poſſeſſion the riches of our houſe, and which all our petitions had not been able to make him relinquiſh, notwithſtanding the promiſes he gave to have mercy on the children of that juſt man his revenge had puniſhed with death."

"What," cried I, "is the recompence we have received for the wrongs ſuſtained by my father, or thoſe done to ourſelves? It is that we are merely allowed to breathe the air of our native home, and to ſubſiſt on the fortune of our mother. I demonſtrated to her that not only our particular intereſt, but that of the Republic at large, dictated vengeance

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on a prince, cruel, ſelfiſh, arbitrary—that no nation, or people, would blame her ſons for revenging the ignominious execution of their father. My mother heard me with coldneſs, proceeding from prudence; ſhe ſhook her head, and did not ſeem to enter into my ſentiments—my brother, who was preſent, adopted the ſame reaſonable moderation.

"I diſapprove of your deſign," ſaid he; "it ſpeaks a noble heart, but it is raſh, it is ill digeſted, it is dangerous: reſentment, that ſort I mean which is commonly called revenge, is only to be juſtified by equality of power with the enemy we have to oppoſe. Where is this equality? Is it to be found between the tyrant who murdered, and the children of that murdered father? Shall we, who have neither money, friends, nor credit, contend with a prince, whoſe frown would cruſh us to atoms? Ah! my dear brother, too ſure were we to embark in our preſent ſtate on the tumultuous ocean of conſpiracy, our hopes would be ſplit, and we ſhould become the wreck of our preſumption." My mother embraced us both, ſhe wept over us

 both,

both, but ſhe declared herſelf decidedly of my brother's party.

"Finding ſo many obſtructions ariſe from my family, I entered into plans of my own, without their participation, and began to entangle myſelf in an intrigue, very badly concerted. I learnt by accident, that on a certain day the prince intended going to the Hague, by Ryſwick. No ſooner did I underſtand theſe particulars, than I promiſed great riches to a reſtricted number of ſailors, if they would ſecond me in a cauſe of ſome danger that would, when well executed, eventually ſerve their country: they aſſured me of their hearty aſſiſtance—we ſhook hands on the bargain, and parted, after I had given them repeated charges that they ſhould punctually perform the orders I ſhould tranſmit to them, through the channel of three perſons, who were my only aſſociates, and in whom I thoroughly confided.

"The day I expected with ſo much impatience at laſt dawned upon my hopes of revenge, the prince arrived at Ryſwick, by which time three or four of the ſailors, without

out preciſely knowing the buſineſs on which I had engaged them, played me a trick that at once opened my eyes, and convinced me of my folly in truſting them; they went to his highneſs, diſcovered to him that they had hired themſelves, and received money to do an action which the perſon who employed them did not explain farther than that it was intended for the good of their country.

"Maurice ſurpriſed, perhaps a little alarmed, put to them many queſtions, but could gain no farther information; they had told all they knew, and fortunately they did not know much, except that, juſt as they were quitting him, one of them recollected to tell him other ſailors had been engaged at the ſame time, on the ſame buſineſs, and by the ſame perſon, who tampered with themſelves: theſe men, they ſaid, were to be met with at the Hague, and mentioned the inn which they commonly frequented. On this laſt piece of intelligence the prince, without waiting to refreſh himſelf, inſtantly purſued his way to the Hague, where he cauſed the ſuſpected ſailors to be arreſted, and brought before him; the officer of juſtice ſeized, to-

gether with their perſons, on a coffer concealed in the inn, filled with piſtols and other arms, intended the next day for Ryſwick: on the firſt part of their examination the priſoners feigned ignorance, but ſuch rough meaſures were taken with them as brought them to unbounded confeſſion; and fearing the whole conſpiracy was unveiled, I fled with all haſte to Bruſſelles—my brother alſo, though not concerned in my project, was liable to a ſhare in my puniſhment; he therefore followed the example I had ſet him of temporary retirement, and concealed himſelf in a ſmall village on the borders of the ſea, from whence he engaged a fiſherman to conduct him in his bark as far as the Engliſh coaſt: the expedition began with an unlucky omen, for as ſoon as they got off from the ſhore the agitation of the waters drove them back again, ſo that my brother thinking it unſafe to continue in the village any longer, was about to ſeek another place more convenient, from which he might embark for England; when being purſued, he was unfortunately overtaken, and led to that priſon once occupied by our ſainted father. Together with his dungeon he ſucceeded alſo to the

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ſpirit of that ſuffering martyr, not indeed that he was quite ſo clear from the charge of intentional treaſon as his father, becauſe I had entruſted him with my plans, though he would not enter into them, much leſs did he entertain any thoughts of betraying them—he wiſhed to ſtop my headſtrong proceedings, but finding it impoſſible, he let me take my chance, and remained ſilent; which ſilence ſome people may impute to him as a crime againſt the ſtate, whilſt his father had not even the ſhadow of a crime to annoy his conſcience, or to yield a pretence for the juſtification of his perſecutors.

"It is wonderful with what courage and firmneſs my brother anſwered to the interrogations of his inquiſitors; ſo far was he from pleading inactivity, and making a merit of having endeavoured to turn me from my purpoſe, he boldly avowed his approbation of the ſteps I had taken, and was condemned to loſe his head, which ſentence he received with a ſmile, betraying no ſymptoms of fear or weakneſs; but my mother, whoſe huſband was again going to ſuffer in

the perſon of her ſon, flew with rapidity to throw herſelf at the feet of the prince, to demand his mercy. Surpriſed at her condeſcenſion, he aſked why ſhe did that in favour of her ſon which ſhe had refuſed to do for her huſband, and this was her anſwer:

"My huſband was innocent, and did not fear to meet death—my ſon is guilty, and I fear it for him." This reply ſo ſimple, yet ſo ſublime, produced an effect that hardly could have been expected; it gave to the prince a glorious opportunity of repairing the injuries he had done our family, by the unconditional pardon and releaſement of my brother. As it was chiefly *Remonſtrancers* that I had choſen to aſſiſt in my conſpiracy from the time it was blown, theſe people were followed with greater perſecutions than before; their principal miniſters were ſolemnly excommunicated, and excluded from all truſt, ſo that a man of wit might have ſaid, that perſons of the firmeſt probity, the ſtricteſt honour, were given to the devil by a decree of the States—during the whole of this troubleſome epoch, ſelf baniſhed

from

from my country, I wandered about from one place to another, though the chief part of my pilgrimage was paſſed between Spain and France.

"After ſome years of penance, I have lately received information of my mother's death, by which event I inherit an immenſe fortune. I have alſo obtained letters of abſolution for that madneſs of conduct which plunged me into diſgrace, with full liberty to reviſit Holland whenever I pleaſe: it is thither I go—it is there that I mean to ſettle—and——"

He pauſed—I ſaw by the expreſſion of his eyes what he would farther have added.—I durſt not truſt myſelf to contend againſt the united powers of ſincerity, tenderneſs, and eloquence; I therefore interrupted his intentions, by turning his thoughts from the object before him, and returning them to the ſubject of his family. I aſked him a thouſand confuſed queſtions about his brother—I talked of all thoſe men mentioned in his memoir; and he, by the laws of politeneſs, however impertinent my queſtions, was

forced to anſwer them, ſo that I contrived to find him conſtant employment till ſome other company joined us, which relieved me from a ſituation truly embarraſſing.

I think I have ſaid enough to convict me of feeling thoſe ſentiments for Monſieur Barneveldt he acknowledged for me—yes, I loved him in ſpite of my beſt endeavours not to love him—not to cheriſh his idea—"Barbarous deſtiny!" I exclaimed, "why has it betrayed me hither? Is it to make me ſtill more unfortunate in Spain than I was at Tunis? There, indeed, I was a ſlave without the means of breaking my chains, yet here I am in a thouſand times worſe condition—I have devoted my heart to a man with whom I can never be united."

One day that I particularly indulged theſe gloomy reflections, and was feeding with luxury on my own ſadneſs, Monſieur de Barneveldt made his appearance unexpected, though I confeſs not unwelcome; he had been watching me before I perceived him—he ſaw the ſuffuſion of my tears—he heard the melancholy utterance of my ſighs.

"Ah!"

"Ah!" cried he, "what new ſorrow is this which invades the moſt amiable mind in the world?"

"I have been making you the confidant of my thoughts," replied I—"I was talking aloud—it was great folly to do ſo—and you have certainly overheard what I was ſaying."

"No, upon my honour," anſwered he, with candour that forced me to give it credit; "whatever were your thoughts they are ſtill your own; but if I could ſuppoſe they were favourable to me, that dear ſuppoſition would conſtitute the whole of my felicity."

I did not—becauſe I could not ſpeak—and he continued.

"No, I muſt not expect to be ſo happy—it is only when I am with you that you are plunged in affliction—it is certainly my preſence by which you are afflicted—you hate me for a preſumption I am not able to maſter—you hate me for loving you with a paſ-

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ſion ardent as unbounded, durable as my exiſtance."

"Alas!" ſaid I, "it is not your partiality that offends, it is the difficulties of my own ſituation that afflicts me—I would have you think of me with more moderation; yet ſo little do I underſtand myſelf, that perhaps if you loved me leſs I ſhould only weep the more."

"What then is the cauſe of theſe tears, of this anxiety? Tell it me I beſeech you—If I am not the object of your indifference, what are the hopes of happineſs to which I may not aſpire?—open to me the ſoul of ſenſibility, of honour, of tenderneſs—declare the cankering ſecret that preys on its tranquillity—perhaps—yet pardon the indelicate ſuggeſtion—perhaps theſe difficulties which cauſe you ſo much inquietude may have their root in an evil eaſily redreſſed—Deareſt of women! forgive my freedom—reveal to me the ſtate of your finances; if fortune has injured you, mine is more than ſufficient to repair its injuries; though you ſhould kill me by refuſing me yourſelf, yet accept my

ſervices;

ſervices; conſider them the offer of a ſolid friend, not as the tribute of a tender lover—I am willing to owe the greateſt of all obligations to you—in granting me the favour I requeſt, you ſecure my eternal gratitude—I leave you independent as to the moſt precious of all gifts—I do not aſk you for your heart or your hand, give or withhold them from me as your affections and your juſtice ſhall hereafter determine."

Sentiments ſo tender, ſo generous, accompanied by an air ſo noble, ſo ſincere, gave the electrical ſtroke to my ſenſibility, and I cried out, in a tone of pleaſure unmixed with reſerve, "Dear De Barneveldt, you ſhall ever find me as candid, as diſintereſted as yourſelf; far from denying the command you have over my affections, it is my glory to declare their obedience to confeſs that they equal your own, in ardency, in ſincerity, in every thing but the graces of expreſſion; yet I cannot be yours—the vaſt diſparity between your riches and my poverty is a bar never to be ſurmounted—this is the cauſe of my grief—this is the cauſe of that chagrin which will end only with my life."

In

In uttering these last words my face was covered with blushes, whilst my eyes, conscious their evidence was unnecessary to strengthen the confession my tongue had made, cast their glances on the ground, where they met those of my lover, who had fallen at my feet in an ecstasy not to be described.

"Good God!" cried he, "is it possible you repay my ardour with so much softness, yet talk of bars not to be surmounted? From this moment there can be but two impediments to our union — we must cease to love, or we must cease to live — there is no mortal event besides that shall impede our felicity."

"Ah!" replied I, sighing deeply, "how little do you know of my birth, which is so uncertain that even I cannot explain it; perhaps it may be mean, it may be shameful— my fortune too is desperate—I am every way unworthy of your alliance—I will not embrace a good that must arise out of the sacrifice you would make to me of your interest."

"How irreconcileable are the mixture of sentiments you betray," said he impatiently; "so

" ſo much precious ſenſibility, ſo much ſtoical caution—away with theſe ſcruples I implore you—whatever your birth may be, whatever your fortune is, my ambition, my hopes, my happineſs is to ſhare my poſſeſſions with you, to receive your hand at the altar, to love you ever, and never to be ſeparated from you."

" That cannot be," I returned, " unleſs Heaven ſhould in its goodneſs diſcover to me the authors of my being, and they ſhould happen to be of a rank that would not diſgrace you—my purſuits after them have hitherto been in vain, though inceſſant."

I ſaw he was diſpleaſed—I feared his diſpleaſure, and to amuſe it for a time I began telling him my little hiſtory from the firſt of my remembrance to the preſent moment.

" Well, Madame," cried he, as ſoon as I had finiſhed it, " though you cruelly riſe ſo many fanciful obſtructons to my happineſs, they did not interrupt that of Signor Roſino—you cannot deny that they exiſted for him

him as well as for me—yet you loved him, and therefore it was that you married him."

"No," ſaid I; "he was not dearer to me when I conſented to be his wife than you are at this moment, and had I the ſame wealth to beſtow on you that I brought with me from the foreſt of Ardennes and gave to him, the objection which proceeds from the ignorance of my parents would be no more difficult for you than it was for him to get over—My love for you will never change—my fortune may—and if I can ever bring you a dower I ſhall joyfully preſent it to you, together with the hand you ſolicit—if you are ſo good to be ſatisfied with this promiſe, I leave with you my heart as the hoſtage for its performance."

"This is all very fine talking," he replied, walking from me, then turning to me again and taking both my hands in his—"yet you certainly did love this amiable Florentine better than you love me—for his ſake you forſook the ſearch in which your whole ſoul was before employed—you ceaſed to think any more of recovering your mother—

ther—you married him—you went with him to Italy—Ah! how fondly you muſt have adored this fortunate huſband!"

I know nothing of the ſentiment by which my whole frame was agitated on hearing him ſpeak thus—it ſeemed like profaning the memory of that adorable huſband—it ſeemed to reflect guilt on myſelf, to think that I was entertaining another lover, and that this other, preſuming on my weakneſs, had ventured to pronounce his name in a ſort of jealous tranſport—it planted in my memory a thouſand daggers—at one view I ſaw the beloved Roſino in all the tender, all the intereſting ſituations in which I had ever beheld him—I ſaw him fall in my defence—I felt him expire on my boſom—all the world but himſelf was forgotten—I even did not regard the preſence of Barneveldt—I claſped my hands together, tears ſtreamed from my eyes, and I exclaimed, "Ah! my God, why did I not expire with him?"

Inſtead of offending Barneveldt by my anguiſh or the exclamation I had uttered, it ſeemed to inſpire him with rage againſt himſelf

ſelf—he again fell at my feet—he called himſelf my tormenter—he entreated my pardon—he declared his unworthineſs to ſucceed in my affections a man whoſe glory was eſtabliſhed by the exquiſite affliction his remembrance coſt me.

"Ah!" cried he, "continue to adore the memory of this amiable huſband—I deſire not to interpoſe between you—I would not be his rival, I would only be his repreſentative—I would be another lover, another huſband, as tender, as true, as dear to you as Roſino."

Whilſt he was ſpeaking he covered my hands with his kiſſes, and theſe kiſſes were mingled with tears of regret for having inadvertently occaſioned me a ſorrowful retroſpection.—Can it be ſuppoſed theſe charming efforts of conſolation were thrown away on a ſenſeleſs ingrate? No; indeed we became the beſt friends in the world—I renewed my engagement to be his whenever fortune ſhould be leſs adverſe to our wiſhes; and if he was not happy at having his hopes put back to a diſtance ſo remote, ſo full of uncertainty, yet for that time he attempted to appear ſatiſfied;

fied; but the very next day he began again to renew his importunities.

"It is not," ſaid he, "that I diſapprove your deſign of perſiſting to find out your parents, I only aſk for a legitimate authority to aſſiſt you in the reſearches you meditate—we will go together in purſuit of them all over the world—if we find them of that exalted rank which the nobleneſs, the delicacy of your ſoul ſpeaks them to be, we will honour, we will revere them—if, on the contrary, it is poſſible ſuch all-excelling beauty as yours, ſuch graces of perſon and mind as you poſſeſs, ſhould derive their origin from obſcurity, we will draw them out of it—we will love, we will cheriſh, we will ſerve them—in either caſe, whether born of a prince or a beggar, you will equally, and for ever, be the object of my adoration."

My gratitude, my tenderneſs became too ſtrong for the powers of ſuppreſſion, but he would not let me relieve my heart of its delightful burden, till he had ſaid a great deal more to the ſame purpoſe.

"I ſhall not ſuffer you," cried he, "to interrupt me, unleſs it be to tell me I have conquered all your objections, that you will be mine, that you will receive my vows, that you will plight me your's before we leave Madrid.—Ah! can you promiſe me this if you can ſpeak, and I will liſten to you as I would to the voice of an Angel?"

I ſmiled, and to ſignify that his rhetoric, however faſcinating, had not yet prevailed, I laid my finger on my lips.

"I underſtand you," continued the generous pleader, "you are not moved by my entreaties.—Well, then, I have a thouſand other arguments to advance, and I inſiſt on your hearing them all... The bar which you place againſt my felicity, on the ſcore of fortune, is even of leſs conſequence than the phanthom impediment you have raiſed reſpecting the uncertainty of your birth; yet you ſeem to make it a more ſerious obſtacle. I beg you to ſuppoſe, what would be the condition of that man who can find no relief in the abundance of his riches, becauſe, by enchantment, he is faſtened down to the

earth

earth famiſhing, yet in ſight of all that is deſirable to prolong his exiſtence?—I am that man—you are my enchantreſs—I cannot live without you—yet you bid me ſtarve till you can bring to me more of that droſs of which I have already but too large a portion, unleſs you have ſo much compaſſion as to fit me for its enjoyment by condeſcending to ſhare it with me."

I have wondered a hundred times ſince how it was poſſible for me not to have yielded, without reſtrictions, to arguments ſo ſweetly pleaded, ſo graciouſly enforced; but all he could prevail on me was to aſſure him, in mitigation of my firſt ſentence, if, in one year, I ſhould make no diſcoveries of my birth, or any aggrandizement to my fortune, and he continued to honour me with his affection, I would then ſurrender—he ſhould then make the terms of his own happineſs, which I would ratify and preſerve for the reſt of my days. He greatly overrated the ſmall indulgence my prudence had granted him—he repaid it by the moſt rapturous thankfulneſs, which convinced me

there is no gratification under the ſun ſo exhilarating as to make the felicity of an amiable lover.

Monſieur de Barneveldt, no leſs liberal than tender, continued to love and to pleaſe me. He made me the moſt happy of women — he would have made me the moſt expenſive of miſtreſs's, but I refuſed his preſents, I told him they were too magnificent for the acceptance of any body but his wife. Sometimes he would upbraid me for not giving myſelf a title to receive them in that character — ſometimes he would appear piqued at my caution, and miſcal it prudery; but, on the whole, it certainly did not leſſen me in his good opinion, or diminiſh his paſſion for me.

It would be no impolitic conduct were coquettes to adopt a ſyſtem of diſintereſtedneſs in theſe ſort of tranſactions, if it were only the more to ſtrengthen their intereſt; for thoſe gifts which are exacted by avarice, are always given with a grudging mind, nor are they of half the intrinſic value as when the giver

giver ſelects from his own choice the free-will offering of untutored bounty; by which reaſoning I mean to ſhew that a right action may aſſiſt a bad cauſe—all women of honour would avoid laying themſelves under obligations to their lover—all women of delicacy would revolt at accepting favours from any man but a huſband, and coquettes would find their advantage, if, for once, they could bring themſelves to follow a virtuous example.

I often went about the pleaſant environs of Madrid, always accompanied by my lover, but never without taking my woman in the carriage with us, for though I had no doubts either of his honour or my own, yet there is a certain decency due to appearances, from which it is almoſt criminal to depart.

One day, as we proceeded through a beautiful road, Monſieur de Barneveldt ſignified his intentions of leaving me for a few minutes to enjoy the freſhneſs of the evening on foot, and, bidding me for his ſake to take care of myſelf, particularly that I did not let any body run away with me, he

jumped out, and my coachman kept on at the ſame pace as before. We were hardly moved a hundred yards from the ſpot where we had ſet him down, when a Chevalier came gallopping by us, and, as my eyes followed in admiration the ſwift motion with which his horſe conveyed him, I ſaw ſomething drop from his ſaddle; my Femme de Chambre did not wait for my commands, but, ſpringing from the carriage, ran to pick it up, and having done ſo put it into my hands. It was a caſket of exquiſite workmanſhip, the lid of which was ſo ſlightly faſtened, that we lifted it without much difficulty, and ſaw that it contained a vaſt collection of the moſt beautiful diamonds, ſurpaſſing any that had ever before been in my poſſeſſion, not only in quality, but in quantity. We ſcreamed after the unfortunate perſon who had dropped them with all our united force, but he neither heard our voices, nor once turned round that we might beckon him towards us; and I actually wept with vexation to think what his miſery muſt be when he ſhould diſcover his misfortune.

"What

"What is the matter with you?" ſaid De Barneveldt, who rejoined me at the moment; "have left you but a ſhort time, and I find you in tears."

"You rob me," cried I, "of all occaſion to ſhed them any longer on my own account, ſo I can make no better uſe of them than in ſympathiſing with others leſs lucky than myſelf. See," continued I, diſplaying the caſket and its glittering treaſures, "ſee what a prize fortune has thrown into my lap—ſee how unthankfully I receive that bounty which cannot be ſhowered on me without prejudice to another—however rich the owner of theſe jewels may be, the loſs of them muſt very much reduce, if not abſolutely ruin him."

I then told him by what extraordinary chance I held them in my keeping. He examined every particular gem with minuteneſs, declared them of immenſe value, but gallantly added they were not half fine enough to make them worthy of their lovely poſſeſſor.

"Poſſeſſor!" I repeated, "I hope you do not call me the poſſeſſor of this capital fortune; on the contrary, you muſt take charge of it till we can hear of the Chevalier who has the beſt right to them—he is wretched enough, no doubt, at a loſs ſo very conſiderable."

"I differ from you in opinion," replied De Barneveldt; "on the ſubject of *right* it is your's—chance has preſented you with this gift, becauſe you would not receive it from the hands of love—as to keeping them for you till they are owned, I beg to decline the office, becauſe I am convinced it would be endleſs. You did not know the Chevalier who laid them at your feet, and how are we ever to find him?—If you were to give yourſelf too much trouble in ſearching for this unknown, I might diſcover myſelf to be more intereſted in your inquiries than you may imagine."

I thought in ſaying this he alluded to a certain tincture of jealouſy that ſometimes ſhewed itſelf in his diſpoſition, ſo I ſaid no more either of the caſket or Chevalier.—

I locked

I locked up the one, and, during the fifteen days I remained afterwards at Madrid, I made the moſt diligent inquiries for the other both privately and by public advertiſement, but they were all equally fruitleſs.

I again ſpoke to De Barneveldt of the ſurpriſe and mortification this ill ſucceſs created me; he only laughed at the trouble I expreſſed, aſſuring me I ought to make up my mind to the event, and turn the diamonds to my own uſe; for if the perſon who dropped them was ſtill at Madrid, it was plain he never meant to reclaim them, and, if a native of any other country, as perhaps might be the caſe, it was impoſſible that I ſhould ever meet with an opportunity of returning them. He uttered all this with an air ſo gay, ſo unembarraſſed, ſo natural, that my penetration was entirely darkened, and I went on grieving as before for the fate of him at whoſe expence I had been ſo ſuddenly enriched, nor was it for a long time after that I came to underſtand the truth of the matter in regard to whom the jewels belonged —

longed — how little I owed to chance, how much to premeditated kindness.

Monsieur de Barneveldt knew that I was on my route to Holland from the first time I met with him at Madrid, and he insisted on being my conductor to the land of his nativity, a request I most readily granted. His company was the blessing I prized above all other blessings, so that, when we set out for Cadiz, I left Madrid with spirits as light, and a heart as much at ease, as joy and love could make them.

I have always remarked that extremes of every kind are at constant war with each other — those who would never be too sad, should never be too cheerful — those who would avoid exquisite misery, should never suppose themselves to be exquisitely happy. We have no other rule but comparison, by which we can measure our feelings; moderation is, therefore, the only equipoise by which we should regulate them, that we may not rise too high, or fall too low, in the scale of

of our good or evil destiny. The reason of my entering into this philosophical discussion will discover itself in the course of my own immediate example: those who have heard me boast of my gaiety, of my happiness, on the beginning of my journey from Madrid, before thirty miles of it are completed will see me the veriest wretch of wretches—the more so because the stroke fell upon me at a time when I thought myself the most happy of the happiest.

I have mentioned the distance to which we had arrived, when all my hopes were crushed, all my air-built edifices of an union with the most amiable and best beloved of mankind fell to the ground. I have only to relate by what fatal chance all these calamities were accomplished:—A party of desperate plunderers rushed from their concealment, on the side of a plain, to fall upon us. Poor De Barneveldt knew their intentions were to attack us; he was on horseback, attended only by his valet de chambre, and one of his lacqueys, each of whom were well armed, and put themselves on their guard; but,

but, alas! their dear maſter, heedleſs of his own ſafety, attended only to mine, ordered the poſtillion who drove my chaiſe to go on with all poſſible ſwiftneſs, and, at his peril, not to let me be ſtopped by the banditti — which commands were ſo well obeyed, that we flew with ſo much rapidity as to eſcape danger, and almoſt to take away my ſenſes; not an object could I diſtinguiſh on the road, and I ſcreamed at every ſtep that carried me further from De Barneveldt. At length we arrived at a village; I was taken more dead than alive out of my chaiſe, conveyed to a chamber in a pitiful inn, where I fell from one fainting fit into another, till the ſervants of Monſieur came to inform me their maſter was no more. One would have thought that, in the condition to which my fears for his ſafety had reduced me, ſuch intelligence as they brought with them would have put an end to my exiſtence — far from it — ſo eager was I to ſupply my griefs with freſh prey to feed on, that I rouſed from a ſtate of inactive gloom to one of phrenzical reſolution. I demanded the manner of his death — I bid them conceal nothing from me — I ſhed no

tears—

tears—tears would have diſgraced the agony that conſumed me.

The poor creatures trembled whilſt they obeyed the orders which my diſtraction gave them.—They ſaid, after he had ſeen me carried from the ſcene of action, he had fought with the greateſt intrepidity, killed three of the robbers with his own hand; that they had ſeconded his endeavours to the utmoſt of their power; but when they hoped victory was declaring for them, they ſaw their dear maſter fall to the ground from the diſcharge of a piſtol aimed by the hand of a new man, who, ruſhing from the wood on hearing the cries of his comrades, put himſelf in front of the combat. The domeſtics, no longer able to defend their maſter, who was ſurrounded by the murderers all buſy in rifling from his dead body whatever was valuable, flew with terror to bring me news of the dreadful cataſtrophe:—alas! what news!—Yet I heard it with compoſure bordering on inſenſibility, from whence aroſe this hardineſs of compoſure, not from too little, but too great ſenſibility.

I would

I would that inſtant have diſpatched his two ſervants to bring me the body of their maſter, but they were wounded, they bled, their obedience might have coſt them their lives; I took compaſſion on their ſufferings, I bid them ſtay where they were; I called for my poſtillion, I ordered him to conduct ſome men of the village to the very ſpot where he had left De Barneveldt, and not to return without the dear mangled body. I would have gone myſelf on the ſame purſuit; I actually made an effort to follow them, but it was a vain one, my limbs would not ſupport me, and my woman, with the aſſiſtance of our hoſteſs, carried me back to my chamber, where my burſting heart found relief for the firſt time in a deluge of tears; nor did the return of my meſſengers cauſe them to flow with leſs violence—they found the field of battle, they found the corpſe of a man that had been plundered, but naked, and ſo horribly defaced, that it was impoſſible to convey it further than to a neighbouring church, where they ſaw it ſolemnly interred by the parish prieſt, who provided whatever was neceſſary to decency, the expences of which they had defrayed; nor could I be

angry

angry with them that they acted against my commands in not producing it to my sight in the dreadful state they represented.

For this recent and irreparable loss nothing was capable of consoling me — my eyes were steeped in sorrow — my heart perpetually lamented that the vital spark of its affection was for ever extinguished, never to be rekindled — my health wasted — my lips refused nourishment — my tongue condemned itself to silence — my thoughts shut themselves up in the dungeon of despair, and my whole soul was wrapped in the gloomy reflection that, in the tenderest of lovers, I was also deprived of the only friend I had in the world.

In a situation so little calculated for exertion, I felt too much aggravation to my woes in my vicinity to the scene of their establishment not to move the first time I could be lifted to my carriage, and I pursued the road to Cadiz, in hopes that the change of scene might divert my attention from the melancholy objects on which it was eternally riveted.

I staid

I ſtaid but a ſhort time at Cadiz, my health grew better, but my ſpirits laboured under their uſual burden. I was haraſſed by the noiſe of a buſy town, and embarked for Holland in a large veſſel, laden with merchandize, belonging to a Dutch merchant. It was during this voyage, rendered long and tedious by contrary winds, that my griefs began to huſh themſelves on the boſom of friendſhip — the cold language of caution will not admit the term friendſhip to its vocabulary before it has been tried by a ſyſtem of experience — candour will have nothing to do with forms, you find it ſet down at a moment's warning in her dictionary, by the inſtigation of ſenſibility.

My new friend, with whom I entered into an intimacy, which her thouſand amiable qualities challenged, was a young Spaniſh Lady, going to Amſterdam on the regulation of her accounts with ſome great negotiators of that city, with whom her father had large commercial dealings. She was in deep mourning for her father when ſhe came on board, and my eyes never beheld a more lovely or intereſting figure; but what particu-

larly

larly endeared her to my heart, was the melancholy that enveloped her almoſt as impenetrable as my own.

Two perſons, both victims of ſorrow, naturally endeavour to find conſolation in exchanging the cauſe of it with each other — thus it happened with us. I told her the chief events of my life, and ſhe wept with me the unfortunate fate of De Barneveldt.

" Ah!" cried ſhe, " how eſtimable was the lover you lament — I weep for a father whoſe inhumanity at the moment of my birth has been cancelled by his tenderneſs to me at the cloſe of his own life!"

Theſe few words filled me with curioſity.

" You have partaken," ſaid I, " of my ſorrows; let me be the means of lightening thoſe which oppreſs you."

" If any thing in the world," returned ſhe, with an air full of ſweetneſs, " could remove my dejection, I ſhould ſeek for the remedy of it in your goodneſs; but, alas! I

fear it is not even in the power of ſympathy to relieve the deep diſtreſſes that have taken root in my mind."

"How is it," ſaid I, with ſome ſurpriſe, "that you acknowledge your father to have treated you with inhumanity, repented of only in the laſt moments of his life; yet you refuſe now to be comforted becauſe he is no more?"

"My father's error," ſhe replied, "was not rooted in his heart, it grew up amongſt the weeds of credulity, it was nurtured by ſuperſtition, it flouriſhed at the commencement of my life, it was repaired at the termination of his — I therefore reſpect his memory without devoting myſelf to miſery — I have other cauſes for my affliction more juſt, and a thouſand times more ſevere!"

"And you will not conceal them from me," cried I, tenderly embracing her, whilſt I wiped from her pale cheeks the tears that bedewed them.

"No!"

"No!" ſaid ſhe, "it is impoſſible to deny the ſecrets of woe to the entreaties of gentleneſs—if you have the goodneſs to liſten, I ſhall make a very ſtrange début to a very ſtrange hiſtory."

I ſignified my impatience to become the confidante of her troubles, and ſhe immediately entered on the following extraordinary particulars.

## HISTORY *of a* SPANISH LADY.

"I am the daughter," ſaid ſhe, "of a merchant of Cadiz, whoſe affairs were always in a flouriſhing condition. Before my appearance in the world he was the father of two amiable ſons, and poſſeſſor of a princely fortune; in tranſacting buſineſs he was conſidered to be a man of firſt-rate abilities, and in the common affairs of life his underſtanding would have been undiſputed, but for one blameable weakneſs which led him to believe, without reſerve, in men no wiſer than himſelf, for revealing what

Providence has kindly concealed behind the curtain of futurity—to one or other of these impostors he had recourse whenever he had ships at sea—whenever he made a purchase: in short, he consulted them on every affair of consequence before he would enter into any serious engagements, and regulated all his actions by the advice of astrologers. About the time when my mother expected to increase her family, he went amongst them to inquire the sex, as well as the destiny of the child he should present to him."

"It will be a daughter," said they, "and if she does not die in the birth, she will cause the death of your two sons, as well as your own."

"My father, who adored his sons, flew to my mother with all the traces of horror painted on his countenance, and repeated to her the terrifying prediction: her mind, like his, was tinctured with superstition, and easily received the impression of his fears—they gave themselves up to misery with as much certainty, as if a voice from Heaven had announced the oracle of fate—they never

saw

ſaw my brothers without preſſing them in their arms, and lamenting over them that they were to have a ſiſter who would be their deſtruction: they hated before they had ſeen me; they waited for the moment of my birth, as a criminal for the execution of his ſentence: they had ſome little hope from the fortune-teller's reſervation, that I ſhould not behold the light—they even went ſo far beyond wiſhing I might never be born, that they actually would have perſuaded themſelves the ſin of ſtrangling me in the birth would be leſs than letting me live to become the murderer of my father and brothers: at laſt they fell on an expedient to get rid of me for ever, without imbruing their hands in my blood; and after their plan was ſettled, they waited for my appearance with a great deal of impatience.

"A man, whom my father had bribed to his purpoſe, was ordered to attend in the next apartment to that in which my mother ſuffered the pangs of childbirth, and under the moſt binding oath never to betray the truſt repoſed in him; my father himſelf put me into his arms, when I had ſcarce com-

pleted the tenth minute of my age; my father did not once caſt his eyes on me, leſt his heart might ſoften at the ſight of my helpleſs ſtate, or his ears be pierced with my innocent cries. My brothers muſt be ſaved, whatever might be ſacrificed to preſerve them. He alſo would have hindered my mother from beholding me, but ſhe caſt one look on my face which he could not prevent, that had nearly deſtroyed their unnatural purpoſe; her cheek was united to mine, ſhe moiſtened it with tears of repentance—ſhe appealed to the humanity of my father, who, inſtead of liſtening to her maternal pleadings, ſnatched me from her arms, and conſigned me over to the man who waited to receive me. He delivered with me a conſiderable ſum under the agreement before ratified, that he was never to hear of me again, or to know where I was depoſited.

"My mercenary guardian knew a vine dreſſer, who lived at a great diſtance, an honeſt labourer without children, who he did not doubt would take good care of me, and feeling compaſſion for my deſerted ſtate, he took the trouble of a very long journey to eſtabliſh my

my future ſettlement; the vine dreſſer and his wife were charmed with the preſent he made them, not from intereſted motives, for he gave no money with me, nor did he tell them to whom I belonged; on the contrary, he dropped hints that ſignified he was himſelf my father, though he might never have it in his power to demand me of them, ſo adviſed I might be brought up to induſtry, that my labours might repay them for my maintenance: they were well ſatisfied with the conditions, and from that moment ſupplied to me the place of my real parents.

"I was treated by theſe good people as a daughter infinitely dear to them; they were never tired of careſſing me; they had told me I was not their child; but the knowledge of this ſecret produced no other effect than to add reſpectful gratitude for their bounty to the filial fondneſs I felt for their tenderneſs; and the firſt eleven years of my life paſſed without taking away any part of my happineſs, or leaving me any thing to regret.

"The firſt time my little heart became ſuſceptible of pain was, when my beloved foſter

parents informed me I muſt be ſeparated from them. It was alſo the firſt time I had ever reſiſted their commands, and I now did it with a firmneſs, of which they ſuppoſed me incapable; they ſuffered as much as myſelf in parting with me, but the exchange would be for my advantage; they therefore ſteeled their hearts to my remonſtrances, as well as againſt the pleadings of its own affections, and partly by perſuaſion; partly by authority they brought me to ſubmiſſion, for had I been left to my own choice, I ſhould have puſhed aſide the fortune that purſued me, whether for the better or the worſe, the ſequel will occaſion you to determine.

"An old lady of high quality, to whom the whole of our village belonged, had often in my infancy ſeen, admired, and careſſed me, and at the age of eleven ſhe propoſed to the good people who ſupported me, that if they approved of it ſhe would not only take me off their hands, but adopt and educate me as her own daughter, to ſupply in her affections the place of a very amiable one, of which death had deprived her.

"This

"This lady was a widow and childleſs; her huſband had been a colonel of cavalry, and ſhe was called Donna Medina; on the death of her huſband ſhe quitted the gaieties of court to paſs the remnant of her life in quiet retirement on one of her own eſtates: the companion of her ſolitude was an only daughter, the loſs of whom, by a rapid decline, made her think of adopting me. She gave me her name, as well as her affections, and the title of pretty little peaſant was loſt in that of the fine young lady.

"I ſoon grew to love my new friend with as much fondneſs as I had done my firſt protector's; ſhe permitted them to ſhare my heart with herſelf, and perhaps it was for this reaſon, more than for all her other kindneſs, that ſhe attached me to her with ſuch perfect ſincerity. She ſettled a penſion for life on the dear old couple, beſides receiving them moſt graciouſly whenever they came to ſee me, and enabling me, by her bounty, always to ſend them home loaded with uſeful preſents.

"In

"In the mean time my exalted patroneſs, who would not truſt the forming of my mind to any care but her own, took unwearied pains to model it after her own example; the poliſh of education was only a ſecondary conſideration, yet her goodneſs ſpared no expence to render it perfect.—Thus paſſed between the good vine dreſſers and my noble benefactreſs eighteen of the happieſt years that ever a poor outcaſt from her family was permitted to experience—but the ſun of my fortune was not for ever to ſhine in brightneſs; clouds of a ſombre hue were firſt attracted round it by a fatal diſorder that ſeized on Donna Medina, and at her deceaſe the brilliancy of my proſpects cloſed for ever.—I do not make this ſad remark from having experienced a diminution of wealth or grandeur; I ſhall ſoon convince you the complaint that eſcaped me had no reference to my ſtation in the world, but to the ſituation of my mind.

"That dear adopted mother, who I ſhall bear in eternal remembrance, taught me to expect her diſſolution with Chriſtian calm-

neſs.

neſs. She knew her end was approaching, and ſhe talked of it with ſo much ſatisfaction as almoſt to make me aſhamed of the horrors I felt, when I ſuffered myſelf to reflect that ſhe was going from me for ever. What could there be terrible in death, when ſhe, who was on the eve of meeting it, could dreſs it in the moſt amiable colours, and render it charming by deſcription? Before her ſtrength was exhauſted ſhe exhorted me never to diſcredit the name ſhe had beſtowed upon me—never to unite myſelf to any but a man of condition."

"My fortune is your's," ſaid ſhe, "without reſervation; it is conſiderable enough to make you of conſequence in the province—profit by this advantage; I would not have you grieve too much, my dear child, becauſe I exchange my preſent ſtate for a better; but I would have you always remember her who endows you with thoſe tranſient riches ſhe neither can, nor deſires any longer to poſſeſs.

"Donna Medina expired in my arms, with as little pain as an infant ſleeps in its cradle; the

the manner of her death reconciled me to it more than all the wealth ſhe bequeathed me, which was very great. I remained miſtreſs of the caſtle—I ſent for the vine dreſſer and his wife, to eſtabliſh them in my family; but the old man was dead, and my foſter mother ſo ill, that ſhe could not be moved; indeed ſhe did not long ſurvive her huſband: as ſhe could not come to me, I went to her. I performed the melancholy office of cloſing the eyes of the only remaining friend I had in the world. Afterwards I returned home, where I began to live in all the ſplendour and hoſpitality, for which my benefactreſs was admired and adored by the whole province.

"As ſoon as I was known for the univerſal heireſs of Donna Medina, a numerous hoſt of lovers, young, noble, and gallant, endeavoured to pleaſe me; my heart was no eaſy conqueſt; it held out ſo long without being touched, that they raiſed the ſiege, and left me miſtreſs of my liberty: what uſe I afterwards made of it I am going to relate.

"Two

"Two brothers, who by chance ſaw me in their way through that part of the province in which I reſided, were detained in my neighbourhood by a firſt-ſight impreſſion—they entered my liſt together—they both told me they loved, and they hoped to ſucceed in obtaining me, notwithſtanding the great diſparity between their ſituation and my own; each found his opportunity of ſpeaking to me alone, and I heard them each declare the ſame ſentiments in exactly the ſame language—for my part, I thought them charming; they were often with me, yet I did not ſee them half ſo often as I deſired; but what aſtoniſhed me, and for which caprice I could in no manner account, I loved them both, I loved them ſo equally, that though determined one of them ſhould be my huſband, yet I was a long time before I could fix on which of them it ſhould be.

"A farther knowledge of their characters at laſt turned the ſcale, or ſeemed to turn it in favour of Fernand, the eldeſt brother, whoſe temper was ſoft, mild, complaiſant; beſides, he had much wiſdom, ſome wit, and a very charming perſon.

"Juan,

"Juan, the youngeſt, did not poſſeſs theſe ſeducing graces—theſe captivating qualities, which hurry hearts into making more ſudden than ſure elections; yet, if he had fewer perfections than Fernand, he had ſtill enough, very much to ſhake my attachment for his brother, even after I thought it ſufficiently eſtabliſhed. It was in ſome degree contrary to my inclinations that I gave a preference, ſmall as it was, to Fernand; it was rather the deciſion of my head than my heart; the image of one and of the other were always equally preſent to my mind; and if I ſaw but one of them at a time, my thoughts were altogether occupied by him who happened to be abſent.

"What a wonderful ſituation was mine! I loved both, or I loved neither of theſe brothers. Their perſons, their diſpoſitions bore no reſemblance—yet this difference made none in my eſteem for them; if they had foibles, and I could not help ſeeing them, I felt their faults with as much indulgence as I ſhould my own.—Had not Fernand given me his heart, Juan would have poſſeſſed mine.

"Ah!"

"Ah!" cried I, "what can be the meaning of theſe ſtruggles of this indeciſion? are my affections double, or is it becauſe I do not experience a true paſſion for either of my amiable lovers?"

"As often as I aſked myſelf theſe queſtions, I could not anſwer them to my own ſatisfaction; folly or coquetry muſt be at the bottom of my difficulties: a fool I might be—a coquette I was not. To avoid the diſgrace of ſuppoſing myſelf either, I thought it would be proper to marry Fernand.

"Then," ſaid I, "when my fate is once united to his, I muſt think no more of Juan, and Juan muſt think no more of me."

"Again, this ſentiment appeared indelicate; I wept, and wiſhed one of them would chuſe another miſtreſs; I was convinced ſuch a transfer, inſtead of making me jealous, would adminiſter to my tranquillity. I carried the argument ſtill farther—ſhould I marry one, and the other remain ſingle, my huſband, in ſpite of myſelf, muſt have a

rival

rival, who would eternally be present to my ideas.

"It was a hard fate that I could not prefer one, to the total exclusion of the other—I was unable to comprehend my double sensibility. I trembled with agitation, because I could determine on nothing; and my face was suffused with blushes, whenever I dared to contemplate my own weakness.

"Fernand on his knees would often complain of my gentleness to his brother—Juan would be in despair at the preference he fancied I felt for Fernand, and conjure me, rather than do so, to banish them both from my presence.

"Am I ever," said Fernand, "to have the misery of beholding Juan dispute with me the possession of your affections? Have I only flattered myself that I was dear to you?—Do I expect too much, when I ask you to avow, before my rival, that I have the felicity to be entirely beloved by you, and that you feel for him nothing but indifference."

"I really

"I really believe I love but you," was my reply, "if the ſentiment with which you inſpire me can be called love; when I call it by that name, it is againſt my better judgement. I would rather ſay it was friendſhip, and that as friends you are both the objects of my tenderneſs—I do not try to deceive you, I pray that you might not deceive yourſelf. I wiſh Fernand to love me, I wiſh Juan to love me, but I would have them love me as a ſiſter, to entertain for me no other ſentiment than that innocent regard, which has nothing to do with the paſſions, which does not agitate the mind with tranſports, or fill the heart with hatred, jealouſy, and diſguſt. Let me love you as my brothers; you ſhall then find I have love enough for you both. Surely theſe," added I, "are the very feelings of my ſoul, which I now declare to you."

"My God! what is this you confeſs?" cried he, "you would marry me? Yet that heart which ſhould be the ſole poſſeſſion of your huſband, you are ready to divide with his brother."

"It is even ſo," replied I, "and I am as unable to account for it as you are."

"Tell me, tell me," he exclaimed, "tell me exactly what are the emotions you feel in my favour?"

"I have a lively pleaſure," ſaid I, "whenever I ſee you—I think of you ſometimes when I do not ſee you—your preſence rejoices, your abſence afflicts me."

"Ah! tell me," cried he, "is it only for me that you experience theſe tokens of ſenſibility, or does my brother alſo inſpire them? Do you ſee him with joy? Do you think of him when he is not in your ſight? Are you hurt at his abſence?"

"I acknowledge all that you can ſuppoſe," returned I, very much confuſed; "whatever cauſe the unknown error of my mind may proceed from, I will never have to reproach myſelf for acting by either of you with too little candour, or too much duplicity; from henceforward learn to conſider me as your ſiſter—in that character give

give me time to ſift from my mind the perplexities that confound it, and if I ſhould ever underſtand its languge well enough to correct its faults, my hand, with a heart unclogged by any ſecondary attachment, ſhall be your's, or his, as deſtiny may decide for me."

"For Heaven's ſake, reverſe this cruel ſentence!" ſaid he; "rather give your friendſhip to my brother, if you will but beſtow on me a ſomething more ardent than friendſhip!"

The prayers and entreaties of Fernand, that I would change my reſolution, were ſpent in vain; by my explicit confeſſion I found relief, I ſeemed to have laid down a heavy burden of cares—Juan was alſo informed of my determination, and, being forced to yield, they did it with a tolerable good grace. I ſaw them every day as uſual, but they no longer tormented me with their paſſion, ſeeming to wait patiently for the moment of my deciſion; however, I ſaw with concern, under an appearance of fraternal complacency for each other, that there lurked a

great deal of discontent. I made up several little quarrels between them, which, proceeding from mere trifles, were easily reconciled; but whilst I grieved for the smallest dissension, how little did I foresee in what terrible evils it would at last terminate.

"Oh! my God! it is the scene, Madame, I am going to disclose that poisons my present days, and will imbitter my latest moments!"

Before she announced these words I had penetrated into the cause of her disorder; I put my hand on her's, it was as cold as death, and trembled exceedingly; I pressed her to proceed no further at that time.

"Ah!" said she, "all times, all seasons, are alike for the repetition of a deed so full of horror—let me have done with it now, that hereafter I might think of it less, if that should be possible."

"Juan," continued she, "a thousand times more ardent, more impetuous, than his brother, watched Fernand one day as he

came

came out from my houſe, and, bidding him defend his life, attacked him with the greateſt violence. I heard the claſhing of ſwords, I flew to the window, I ſaw them fighting with deſperation, I would have ran down to ſeparate them, I would have thrown myſelf between them to receive in my own boſom the dangerous blows they aimed at the heart of each other—the zeal of my women prevented me from partaking in the combat, they dragged me from the window, and forced me to my chamber; but what was my grief, what was my deſpair, when informed theſe dear brothers, equally beloved, were left dead on the ſpot, and that their bodies had been ſent home to that part of the country where their father reſided. It was many days before I was capable of receiving this dreadful intelligence—I looked upon myſelf as the miſerable cauſe of their—of my own, of their father's misfortune—nothing could aſſuage my tears—nothing could meliorate my affliction—nothing can ever reſtore my mind to its former tranquillity!"

The father of Fernand and Juan was named Iago Lentilla, had long been a widower;

these were his only sons, and his soul was wrapped up in their welfare. How do I presume to talk of my sorrows, when I contemplate what his must have been to receive them lifeless in his arms! at first he thought they had died in defending each other from the attack of assassins; but when informed the fatal engagement was only between themselves, that their quarrel proceeded from mutual jealousy, what was before despair turned to madness — it was for several weeks that his senses deserted him, and when they returned it was but to increase his incurable anguish.

Iago Lentilla soon found out that I was the occasion, though innocently, of that duel which deprived him of his sons, and he levelled the whole of his resentment against me; he tried to injure my character, but the world regarded this outrage with the contempt it deserved. The prudence of my whole conduct through life had woven for my honour a coat of mail, that the shafts of calumny was not able to penetrate. I wept for the old man's sorrows instead of adding to them by reproaches; a complication of diseases seized upon his feeble frame, and,

on

on his bed of death, my thrice-unfortunate father firſt began to repent of that ſuperſtition which deprived him of a-----

"Ah!" cried I, interrupting the beautiful Narrator—"Ah! you call him father!—Is it poſſible the father of Fernand, of Juan, ſhould be alſo your father?"

"Alas! it is too true!" ſhe replied, in a mournful accent, "and the dear unfortunate youths were my own brothers, which accounts for the motive why my heart was equally divided between them,"

I ſuppreſſed the pangs and aſtoniſhment occaſioned by this ſoul-rending explanation, that I might not increaſe her melancholy, or impede the progreſs of her intereſting memoir, which ſhe recommenced with more firmneſs of voice than might have been expected.

"Ah!" cried my father, to thoſe who waited about his bed, "I am puniſhed in the death of my ſons for the cruelties I executed on a daughter who never offended

me — you are ſurpriſed — you ſtart — you believe that I am uttering a rhapſody — yet nothing is more certain than my being the parent of a daughter, who, at the inſtigation of ſcoundrel impoſtors, I caſt from me as ſoon as ſhe ſaw the light unbleſſed, unproportioned, unprotected — they told me ſhe would cauſe the death of my two ſons and my own — they were liars, and I impious in believing them!"

His friends, ſeeing the agony of his mind, got out of him how, and to whom, he had diſpoſed of me, and afterwards made many fruitleſs inquiries about me, in hopes they ſhould hear I was ſtill living, and be able to adminiſter ſome balm to his wounded conſcience.

At laſt the man, who had taken charge of me at my birth, returned home from a journey that employed him ſome weeks, and, when told of the condition to which his old maſter was reduced, he haſtened to relieve his anxiety by diſcovering to him under whoſe care he had placed me, offering to go and bring him all the intelligence he could gain of

of my preſent condition; at the ſame time freely confeſſing that he had heard nothing of me, or the vine dreſſers, ſince he put me under their protection.

My father revived at the propoſal, and haſtened his departure, that, if it were poſſible, he might have the comfort to embrace me before he quitted the world, returning thanks to Heaven for this happy diſcovery which might lead to the reſtoration of a child who he had ſo inhumanly abandoned, and give him an heir to thoſe abundant riches which could afford him no other conſolation than in repairing the errors of his conduct.

The perſon diſpatched in purſuit of me loſt no time, but travelled day and night till he arrived at the vine-dreſſer's cottage; but he found it deſerted, the door barred, and the little path that led to it overgrown with weeds; from thence he went to the houſe of a neighbour to inquire after his old friends, where he learned they had been both dead ſeveral months. He next aſked what was become of the young girl who they brought up as their own, and they readily told him as much

much as they knew of my hiſtory, which was compriſed in my leaving the vine dreſſers, at the age of eleven, to go and live with a great Lady called Donna Medina, who had taken a fancy to me; that they did not know much about me ſince then, becauſe the old couple, who took care of me before, went to ſettle in another part of the province many miles away. As ſoon as they had made me over to the grand Lady, who, no doubt, they added, had given me good breeding, and made me her ladyſhip's own maid, or at leaſt her companion.

With this intelligence the inquirer haſtened back to my father, who tranſported, as he declared himſelf, at the probability there was of my being alive, yet when told that I had been brought up from eleven years old in a houſe ſo fatal to his ſons, ſo odious to his thoughts, the ſhock of horror he ſuſtained was more than a counterbalance to the overflow of his joyful emotions; nevertheleſs ſo great was his anxiety to recover his deſerted daughter, that, in ſpite of his deteſtation for the very name of Medina, he endeavoured to get the better of his paſſion, that he

he might addreſs a letter of inquiry after his loſt child to the young Medina, who he ſuppoſed to be the real daughter of the deceaſed Lady, and, indeed, many people were of the ſame opinion, becauſe ſhe took pains to have it believed ſhe was my mother.

Whilſt he conſidered me with rigour as the ſource of his afflictions, he knew it was only from me that he could get information of the little girl my ſuppoſed mother had carried away from the poor vine dreſſers, and when he ſhould have found me, the ſolace my preſence would afford him promiſed to compenſate for the force he put on his inclinations, in addreſſing himſelf to the murdereſs of his darling ſons, Fernand and Juan. Loving without diſcovering, hating without knowing me, he compoſed the irritation of his mind enough to dictate for the young Medina a few lines after this manner:

## BILLET.

You are the cauſe, Mademoiſelle, that, at this moment, I mourn the death of two dear

dear ſons, the delight of my eyes, the ſtaffs of my age; you have deprived me of them for ever! — Repair this great injury, I conjure you, by ſending me inſtant information where I am to find a certain young girl, whom Madame, your mother, received from the hands of a vine dreſſer at the age of eleven. The man who delivered her into your family lived in the neighbourhood of Toledo; if ſhe ſtill continues in your ſervice, reſtore her to me, for I am her father, her miſerable, thrice miſerable father — give her to my arms, that ſhe may expunge from my memory the fate of her brothers, and, when I have embraced her, ſhe ſhall, by forgiving the injuries I have done to her, teach me to pardon thoſe I have received from you. — Pity my deſpair, Mademoiſelle, and ſend the child of my affection and remorſe to her ſorrowing parent.

IAGO LENTILLA.

"Expect not, Madame," ſaid ſhe, "that I ſhould be able to explain what were the emotions of my mind on the receipt of a letter ſo unexpected, ſo aſtoniſhing, ſo kind,

and

and yet ſo cruel! — I the daughter of Iago Lentilla! I the ſiſter of Fernand, of Juan! — My God! what intelligence for a drooping ſoul already overwhelmed wih calamities!

"Unhappy wretch!" I exclaimed, "it is then thy brothers who are deſtroyed? — it is thy father whom thou haſt reduced from a ſtate of joy and peace to one of woeful deſperation?"

My women, who heard my lamentations, flew to ſee what was the matter; I believe they thought my intellects were deranged, for I bad them begone with an air ſo wild and ſavage, as made them heſitate whether or no they ſhould obey me. I afterwards gave my commands with more moderation, when they left me to myſelf, but with evident reluctance. Having excluded from my preſence thoſe who might have intruded on my ſorrows, who might have preſumed to ſpeak of comfort, I gave them a free indulgence; my burſting heart relieved by the tears that I ſhed, and the groans that I uttered, became leſs agitated, when, with ſomething reſembling calmneſs, though, in fact, it was only

ſtupidity

ſtupidity from the fatigue of too much exertion, I began to reflect on the meaſures I ought to purſue—I dreaded to ſee my newly-acknowledged parent—I thought the ſight of him would be dreadful—I had no expectation but that his frowns would kill me—yet, at all events, I reſolved to throw myſelf at his feet—duty, nature, compaſſion, every thing puſhed me on, not only to ſee the author of my being, but to ſet out for his houſe immediately. Could I ſuffer him to die without owning myſelf his guilty, yet innocent daughter—without entreating his bleſſing—without receiving his embrace.

"Ah!" cried I, "that thought is excruciating!—He ſays he has injured me—that, if I forgive him, he will then permit me to plead for the pardon of her who has cauſed the death of his ſons.——Oh! my father! how can you have injured me?—what will be your terrible feelings when I appear before you?—will you not ſpurn from your knees the paraſite who kills you by inches, the wretch who has murdered her brothers?"

Overwhelmed

Overwhelmed with reflections ſuch as theſe I ſet out for Cadiz, and ſtopped at the houſe of Lentilla, where I ordered my ſervants to announce me by an occaſional name, fearing that either his own, or that of Donna Medina, might give too great an alarm to the ſpirits of my father. I was told he was extremely ill, but they conducted me to his apartment. The moment I got within the door I grew ſick, my head turned giddy, and I was near falling to the ground, but, for his dear ſake more than my own, I fought with and conquered my diſorder — being a little revived I drew nearer, I ſaw him put out his hand to draw aſide the curtain, but I did not venture to lift up my eyes, they were rivetted on the floor, whilſt my tongue faltering pronounced that I came on the part of Donna Medina, to give him tidings of his daughter.

"I am much obliged to Donna Medina," he replied, in a low and muffled tone, as if he acknowledged her kindneſs with regret; "to you, Mademoiſelle, I am likewiſe indebted for the trouble you are ſo good to take

take in my affairs.—Pray have you any letter to deliver me from the lady?"

"Alas, Sir!" I replied, "Donna Medina wiſhes to explain every thing you deſire, but dares only to aſſure you that your daughter lives, unleſs you have the goodneſs to engage her confidence by promiſing her your ſincere unlimited pardon for the misfortunes ſhe has brought upon your family, for which ſhe is even more inconſolable than yourſelf, and to which it was not her will, it was not her conduct, it was only her deſtiny that contributed—on the ſingle condition of your forgiveneſs, but on no other, ſhe will reſtore to you a daughter who deſires no greater felicity than to ſerve, cheriſh, and love you!"

As I ſpoke he obſerved me with attention, which had in it more of concern than diſpleaſure, then drawing a deep ſigh, that came from the bottom of his heart.

"Donna Medina's meſſage," ſaid he, "is ſo condeſcending, and ſpeaks a ſoul ſo amiable, as entitles her not only to my pardon,

don, but my admiration. I give it her in the fulleſt acceptation of the word; I know ſhe did not ſeek to make me wretched; I feel that the occaſion was involuntary: carry this meſſage, amiable young Lady, to Donna Medina; tell I repent that I have ever imputed blame to her; pray her to forgive the diſtraction of a father.——My tears that I had ſo long ſtrove to ſuppreſs, now fell in a torrent from my eyes.

"You are very gentle," ſaid he, interrupting himſelf, "I am charmed with your ſympathy—I could look on you for ever—ſo amiable in the meſſenger of mercy are the traits of ſenſibility."

I was ſtanding, or rather leaning to ſupport my trembling frame at the foot of his bed, as he uttered theſe encouraging ſentences. Ah! what ſweetneſs did they convey to my fluttering heart—they overwhelmed me with joy—they inſpired me with reſolution.—I ſlid down on my knees—I cried out, claſping my hands together, "I am the miſerable Medina, who was the remote cauſe

that you have no ſons—I am the wretched daughter of Lentilla, by whoſe own misfortune it is that ſhe has no brothers." I was now ſilent, and hid my face on the clothes. I heard him ſob—I heard him call me to him by the tendereſt appellations—I flew to his arms, and we mingled our tears together.

When we were a little compoſed, he deſired me to account for the wonderful declaration I had made, that I was both Donna Medina, and his daughter.

"Of the latter," ſaid he, "I want no proofs; I behold them in your countenance—I read them in your heart—I feel them in my own—I only want you to explain by what aſtoniſhing chance you bear a name more honourable than my own?"

"My deareſt father," I replied, "of that I ſhall inform you immediately; I then began my hiſtory from the time I could firſt remember, to the death of my venerable benefactreſs; there was an event that followed, on which I would have remained ſilent, to

ſpare

ſpare the opening afreſh his wounds, as well as my own; but he bade me ſpeak of Fernand—of Juan—of our firſt acquaintance—of all that had paſſed between us. I durſt not diſobey; with a faint voice, and ſtreaming eyes, I made the ſad recital—his ſobs were audible—but when I had finiſhed, he kiſſed my cheek, he preſſed me to his heart."

"Beloved daughter," he ſaid, "there is nothing in your conduct that is not worthy of praiſe—nothing in mine that does not deſerve cenſure."

He then repeated to me the occurrences attendant on my birth.

"It is I," he added, "who have injured the moſt amiable of children—I recal with ſorrow of ſoul my weak, my unpardonable credulity—the hand of Heaven viſits the crime of a preſuming creature, who tried to wreſt the ſecrets of fate from the boſom of ignorance. I ſent you away to avoid the deſtiny it foretold; the wrath of Providence purſued me, and made the very meaſures I took for the ſafety of my ſons turn to their

deſtruction as well as my own, whilſt it granted to your innocence the protection I had ſo cruelly denied you."

I was more ſhocked at the reproaches the poor old man caſt on himſelf, than I ſhould have been if he had loaded me with them; I threw my head on his boſom, and ſaid every thing I could think of to comfort him.

After a ſhort ſtruggle I had the felicity to obſerve, that my efforts to aſſuage his anguiſh were not entirely without effect; he inſiſted on my taking ſome refreſhment, which I promiſed to do if he would have the goodneſs to permit that it ſhould be brought into his chamber.

"Order that as you pleaſe," ſaid he; "you are the miſtreſs of this houſe, and of all that belongs to your penitent father. You ſee me in a deſperate ſtate—the phyſicians have condemned me to death."

"Believe them not, deareſt father," cried I, interrupting him, "your life is only in the hands of God, and God will ſpare it to the

the prayers of your grateful, your affectionate child—day and night will I implore him to grant me the bleſſing of your lengthened exiſtence."

"Do ſo," ſaid he, embracing me with tears in his eyes; "ſince I have ſeen you I wiſh to live to repair the injuſtice I have done you."

After this interview I never quitted him for a moment; the management of my affairs I confided to a man of buſineſs, well acquainted with my right of ſucceſſion to the fortune of Donna Medina, whilſt the virtues of that charming benefactreſs was almoſt the conſtant theme of diſcourſe between me and my dear oppreſſed parent; he took delight in no other ſubject, though my endeavours to amuſe him were as uninterrupted as my attendance on his invalid ſtate, and the hopes I fooliſhly entertained, that his health would at laſt be re-eſtabliſhed.

Alas! in ſpite of my prayers—in ſpite of my hopes—in ſpite of my cares to prevent it, death entered his chamber, and tore him

from my embraces, when I leaſt expected the blow to fall upon me, and nothing but ſubmiſſion to the awful hand by which it was directed could have poſſibly ſupported me under it.

This was the third victim death had ſnatched from my arms; it ſeemed as if he reliſhed no prey with ſo keen an appetite as thoſe I nouriſhed in my heart.

This obſervation increaſed the number of tears that before trickled down her penſive countenance; and to draw her thoughts from the contemplation of her heavy ſorrows, I inquired what was the occaſion of her voyage to Holland; and ſhe informed me, that at the deceaſe of her father, though he left her univerſal heireſs to immenſe riches, his affairs were ſo deranged, particularly in Holland, where he had effects to a vaſt amount, that her preſence there, whilſt they were under ſettlement, was abſolutely neceſſary.

I thanked Donna Medina de Lentilla for the ſingular and intereſting hiſtory with which ſhe had entruſted me; we then once more

more reverted to my own, yet neither of us would yield the palm of ſupreme miſery to the other.

"Heaven forbid!" ſaid ſhe, "that you ſhould ever be reſtored to your parent under the miſerable auſpices that reunited me to mine."

"Ah!" cried I, "how fervently do I join in your benevolent prayer; but, my kind friend, pray alſo that I may find this dear mother, who I have been purſuing through ſo many European countries—that I may find her in Flanders, whither I am paſſing through Holland in ſearch of her—that I may find her happy—and, oh! pray alſo that when I have found her, nothing but death may ever divide us from each other."

The ſociety of this amiable Spaniard was the greateſt ſolace to my ſorrowful heart I could poſſibly experience; had ſhe been gay, flighty, and happy, I ſhould have thought her company no acquiſition; on the contrary, there can be no intruder more unwelcome than the glances of joy, or the voice

of cheerfulneſs, to a mind enveloped by ſadneſs.

My health was much improved, and my ſpirits leſs depreſſed by the time we arrived at Amſterdam, though I am perſuaded the fatigues of my long voyage would have left me a great deal to complain of, but for the unceaſing attention, the unremitting kindneſs of Donna Medina, who conſidering my wounds more ſharp, becauſe more green than her own, mingled a portion of ſuch balmy ſweetneſs in the leaſt of her aſſiduities, as very much ſoftened my pain, though nothing had the power to drive from my memory the image of De Barneveldt—he was always preſent to my ſight; how then could there be any end to my lamentations for a lover ſo dear, ſo amiable?

Donna Medina felt equally diſpoſed with myſelf not to ſeparate from each other as long as it was poſſible we could remain together; we therefore lodged in the ſame houſe, a very pleaſant one in Ralver Street, near the church of our lady; we had the

ſame

ſame table—the ſame amuſements—the ſame ſentiments—I might ſay our hearts formed that ſort of relative junction which almoſt united them in one.

About the time of our arrival in Holland the different provinces were involved in many troubles; of courſe, Amſterdam being the capital, did not eſcape the general confuſion; hearing ſo much of it, increaſed the melancholy impreſſed on my mind, by returning to my mental view the former ſcenes which I had heard ſo pathetically related by my lamented De Barneveldt, and of which his poor old father was made the victim. To wear away my uneaſy reflections, I inquired a great deal into their preſent ſtate of politics, and the intelligence I gained was as follows:

The States of the province, whoſe finances were much exhauſted, began to be violently alarmed; they aſſembled themſelves in council, and after many debates, lengthened by multiplied propoſitions ſuperſeding propoſition, they at laſt determined, as the beſt meaſures that could be purſued, to diſband

their

their troops: this ſentence diſpleaſed William of Naſſau, Prince of Orange and Stadtholder, who told the officers to pay no regard to the order, he being authoriſed by the States General of the Seven United Provinces to prevent the execution of it: prior to this declaration of the Stadtholder, the States General had entered into his views, becauſe he pretended to have the ſole right veſted in himſelf of diſmiſſing the troops, and becauſe they reſented the proceedings of the States of Holland as contrary to the intereſt of the nation.

This coalition produced its effects—the nobles and gentlemen of the army treated the magiſtrates orders with a marked neglect, that ſhewed how totally they deſpiſed them; others, the richeſt provinces in Holland, and where there were the moſt ſoldiers, the nobility united with them, paying little conſideration to the intereſt of the inhabitants of commercial deſcription—the party who had taken the direction of public affairs into their own hands, named the Prince of Orange as chief of a deputation from the States General to the States of Holland: when the people

people of Amſterdam heard that his highneſs intended to viſit them, they ſent a burgomaſter and the preſident of Echevins, together with his ſecretary, to tell him, that if he choſe to enter their town in the character of Stadtholder, they would receive him with the reſpect due to his rank, but would excuſe themſelves from recognizing him as deputy from the States General.

The prince replied he ſhould, attended by his ſuit, enter the town in quality both of Stadtholder and deputy from the States General.

He was as good as his word—but in the latter capacity the haughty mynheers refuſed him an audience: exaſperated at a reception ſo little calculated to do him honour, he burnt with impatience to let them know he was not to be offended with impunity, and reſolved to give them a blow of authority that they ſhould not be able to reſiſt: according to his meditated vengeance, he ſent to command the attendance ſeparately of burgomaſters, deputies, and members of the provincial council, who durſt not diſobey the

the ſummons, becauſe it was delivered in the name of the Stadtholder, and not in that of deputy from the States General: all theſe men as they arrived were conducted into different chambers, where he cauſed every one of them to be arreſted, and kept priſoners in the palace.

It was thus that Maurice his uncle managed in 1618, but I have nothing to ſay of him in this place, I am too much engaged with the nephew and his deſperate undertaking, to go out of my way, and tread back the path which leads to another ſubject.

The priſoners remained cloſely ſhut up in the palace until the night ſucceeding to the day after their capture, when they were conveyed under a ſtrong guard of horſe and foot to the chateau of Louveſtein as ſo many criminals of ſtate.

Whilſt they were moving from priſon to priſon, the Prince of Orange at the ſame time was marching off to the ſide of Amſterdam, followed by ſeveral corps of cavalry drafted from various garriſons, and under the

the conduct of Count Naſſau: one party of this cavalry, by forced marches in a dark night, and without a guide, wandered out of the road, and after beating about a long time, they found themſelves in the morning nearly in the ſame part of the country from which they were retreating with all poſſible expedition; ſo that, far from being able to execute their project ſo ſoon, or ſo ſilently as they propoſed, they not only loſt many hours, but were eſpied from the forts of Hamburgh and Amſterdam.

This grand troop was reconnoitred with aſtoniſhment; the alarm ſpread inſtantly over both the panic-ſtricken towns, who were hardly able to believe what they had ſeen; in the meantime it was the prince's intention to ſend early in the morning a French officer, accompanied by fifty ſtout men of ſeveral nations, only armed with ſwords, except that each carried piſtols concealed in their clothes; and theſe men were to ſeize on one of the gates to make an eaſy road for the ſoldiery to enter by, for not being expected, they ſuppoſed there would be little or no reſiſtance, without conſidering the

the chance which really happened of their being diſcovered, or the difficulties attending the ſiege of a town ſo well fortified as Amſterdam.

As ſoon as the prince's army were ſeen, and his intentions ſurmiſed, the burgomaſters, aided by the preſident, called out the garriſon—put the bourgeois under arms—placed the cannon on the ramparts—formed the ſoldiers into many companies—fitted out eight ſhips of war, with ſome frigates, to protect that ſide of the town on which is the gulph of Quiderzee. It is not poſſible to beſiege Amſterdam in form, it could only be taken by ſurpriſe, owing to the ſluices and dykes that ſurround it, which undulates the country about it at a ſhort notice. The bourgeois do not think it right for one Chriſtian to carry arms againſt another, yet on this occaſion the love of liberty got the better even of their religious prejudices, and all degrees of people were well diſpoſed to defend their capital—every thing being put in the beſt poſſible condition for reſiſtance, it could not but reach the ears of the Count of Naſſau, who

ſeemed

ſeemed convinced by the intelligence there was no longer hopes to be entertained of ſucceeding by ſurpriſe, and the fallibility of any other mode by which it may be reduced being alſo eſtabliſhed, he ſent into the town a trumpet, charged with a letter from the Prince of Orange, with the additional meſſage, that he wiſhed to deliver it in perſon, if they would allow him to enter the town, accompanied by his cavalry, vainly flattering himſelf they would condeſcend to his propoſal; but the meſſage he received from the magiſtrates diveſted him of this fallacious expectation, for they ſent him word by their deputy, that they ſhould with pleaſure receive the Count of Naſſau if he came unattended, adviſing him, at the ſame time, not to advance his troops nearer, except he choſe they ſhould be deluged, by the precaution they had taken to ſecure the ſafety of their town, as they were determined to take ſuch meaſures for its defence as may not be agreeable to the prince or himſelf; to convince him the more that they were heartily in earneſt, and that execution would immediately follow their menace, they opened two of the ſluices, with a few of the ſmall ditches,

juſt

just to let the count see that they were both in temper and condition ready to drown him and his army if they did not make haste to get out of the way.

It is difficult to describe the confusion this message created; the count instantly sent to let the Stadtholder know the bad success of their enterprise; the prince was sitting at table when he received the news—it seemed to give him a great deal of sorrow, from the precipitation with which he arose to run out of the room, and shut himself up in his cabinet, doubtless there to repent his having attempted to subdue a people, to whom his house was indebted for its grandeur in the same proportion as the state was bound to that house for the conservation of its laws and liberties.

Such was the situation in which I found the Dutch nation, when with Donna Medina de Lentilla I arrived at Amsterdam—I had a little more courage than my amiable companion, yet hardly enough to combat with her terrible fears of sieges and inundations;

tions; indeed, I believe they would have remained unconquered, but for the intervention of Providence, who called upon the prince to render up an account of his actions upon earth at the bar of Heaven; his death was owing to his having overheated himself in hunting, after he had accidentally received infection from the small-pox—the violence of exercise occasioned so desperate a fever as made the disorder fatal, and his exit from the stage of action soon restored the contending parties to peace and good-will with each other.

This disappointed Stadtholder died at the age of twenty-four, having married with the princess royal, daughter of Charles the First, king of England; eight days after the decease of her husband she bore him a son, whom she named William, after his father*.

When these troubles were over, neither Donna Medina nor myself could do any thing for the short time I meant to stay at

* The William here spoken of was that William the Third of England, who dethroned his father-in-law.

Amsterdam, but wander about that beautiful town, equally admirable on the score of its magnificent edifices — multiplied palaces — spacious streets — innumerable sluices, filled with water — the commodious grandeur of the port, always covered with vessels perpetually coming in from every part of the world — the prodigious commerce every where carried on with so much alacrity — the abundant powers, and countless riches of its inhabitants; all these subjects for speculative admiration were not beheld or examined by myself, or my friend, without drawing from us many emphatic exclamations of astonishment; but what delighted us the most, was to observe in a city, where all the precious gifts of God, and the labours of man, united to form an overflow of abundance, neither waste nor luxury could gain admittance; that destroying luxury which feeds like a worm on timber till the heart is gone — the water enters, and the vessel sinks.

Nothing can be more plain than the manners of these republicans, or more strikingly superb than their edifices; they seem to confine to them, and to the public works, the

spirit

spirit of emulation, which in other countries is suffered to roam too much at large, to the great detriment of all civil society. The magistrates themselves are not distinguished by any particular stile of dress, neither are they expected to live more expensively than other men, therefore it is that they retain their native simplicity in their apparel, at their table, and in their trains, a sure way of keeping all the money they accumulate in their own bank, which is undoubtedly the first of any in the whole universe: it is never opened but in presence of the chief magistrate, and there is hardly any body who knows the extent of its riches; it is contained in the interior of the stadt-house, near the exchange; and there is no precaution omitted to maintain its security, which makes it very reasonably to be regarded as invincible; a confidence so universal forms the interest, as well as happiness of this nation, that the merchants generally make their payments in notes, which are negotiated from one to another, without difficulty or distrust.

The diversity of religious opinions which are tolerated in Amsterdam do not discom-

pose the public tranquillity; I was fond of examining not only the dresses and figures, but also the faces of every different sect chance threw in my way: it seemed to me as if I could read in their countenances the merit or demerit of their various persuasions; the features of an old monk who passed by, and looked at me, laid hold on my attention—

"That man," said I to Donna Medina, "has been a man of sorrows."

I spoke low, yet he heard the words I uttered; and turning back, surprised me very much by accosting me in this manner: "You have a great deal of penetration, Mademoiselle, I have passed many years of trouble on account of others, not on my own."

"Ah!" cried I, "it is hard that sympathy which should be the friend, is too often the enemy of our happiness."

"You are very amiable," he returned; "and notwithstanding the change in your habit, I knew you again at the first glance, for

for the handſome chevalier I once ſaw at Dunkirk."

"Good God!" I exclaimed, "what is it I hear you announce?"

"I have yet ſtranger things to tell you," ſaid he; "I know the myſtery of your foreſt education—I know the droll adventure you met with in Mr. Fremen's family—from that time your diſguiſe was no ſecret to any body: the diſcovery and the prudence of your conduct not only made a great noiſe at the time, but inſpired the men with ſuch ſtrong deſires to find out your origin, that ſeveral of them went from place to place wherever you had reſided, till they gathered ſuch intelligence concerning you as intereſted me in your deſtiny, and filled me with ſuch extraordinary curioſity to ſee you again, that however romantic I may appear, I ſolemnly aſſure you I have ever ſince been in purſuit of you, and that I have met with you at laſt is more than a recompence for all the pains I have taken to bring you my devoirs."

What was I to make of all this?—could it be gallantry?—No! the pale emaciated figure before me forbad the idea. Would any man from a mere motive of curiosity travel so far in pursuit of a stranger? This suggestion I could not help thinking more improbable than the other.—What then could be the motive of this good monk for running after me?—I asked him to explain it.

"I am extremely odd," said he, "and we who are eccentrics are happily excluded from the necessity of accounting for our actions, because it is seldom that they are expected to be rational."

"Well," cried I, "whatever has been the cause of your desire to see me, I am convinced you rather wish to serve than harm me, so pray give me an opportunity of thanking you for your kind intentions at my lodgings, where I shall expect you to-morrow at dinner."

I gave him my address; he said he would avail himself of the permission I gave him, and asked my leave to come at an early hour, having

having the history of a friend to relate, which, if I was inclined to hear, would not only entertain, but interest me highly. I told him that I should be glad to see him as soon as he pleased, and we separated.

Without knowing why I felt a strong sort of impatience to see my new acquaintance again, I thought the hours uncommonly tedious that intervened between our parting and meeting; Donna Medina was equally struck by the circumstance of his accosting me with so little ceremony; we could talk of nothing else till we saw him the next morning enter our apartment, when my heart palpitated at sight of him, as if it would have forsaken its residence. I placed this emotion to the account of my curiosity, which had been extremely busy ever since he said he would recount these adventures that were so much to interest me; and we had scarcely exchanged compliments before I put him in mind of his promise. He looked at me, and then on Donna Medina, as if he would have objected to repeating them in any other presence than mine. I understood the expression of his

features, and returned his silent caution by a verbal reply.

"Donna Medina," cried I, "is my very affectionate friend—you may speak freely before her, for if there are any secrets in the history you are so good to communicate, they will be as safe in her keeping as in mine."

"I shall do as you command me," said he, "there are, it is true, secrets of consequence in what I am about to relate, but if this lady is in your confidence, I shall no longer resist the inclination I feel to give her mine also. My memoir will be a long one; you must therefore arm yourself with patience to hear, and, above all, to forget no part of it."

He still continued speaking to me with an air of so much importance, that I began to think him one of these silly, tedious people one sees every day, who being of no consequence themselves, labour to throw superficial consequence over the most trifling actions of others as well as their own; for which class of wonder-makers I have so little respect,

respect, that, supposing the good father to be one of them, I should have been glad with all my heart to have got rid of him, even without a single sample of his performance; but fortune decided better for me than I should have done for myself; he began to speak, and I would not have silenced him for an empire—I hardly knew which most to admire, his illumined features, his graceful action, or the elocution of his language—he no longer appeared the same man I had seen him before; he seemed rather inspired by a ray of the Divinity, and put me so much in mind of my revered Recluse, that I could neither keep my eyes from him, nor prevent them from being filled with tears.

I shall tell the story at large; but to do it justice I should shew the priest, for, unenlivened by his expression, I am conscious it will be like pointing out the beauties of a body which has no soul to give it animation.

*Memoir of the* MARQUIS DE RAMAIS *and* MADEMOISELLE DE PRESLE, *as delivered by the Monk.*

The Marquis de Ramais was of all mankind the most honourable, the most amiable, the most tender.—The monk paused, then added——

"What are the sentiments you experience, Madame?—What is the language in which your heart talks to you at the mention of De Ramais?"

"It tells me," said I, alarmed at the oddity of the question, "that a character such as you describe to be that of the marquis has demands on my veneration; besides which, I fancy I feel already for him a great deal more that I am not able to describe."

"Good!" cried he, "Nature is no blind guide, and if we listen to her voice, we are sure she will not mislead us. You tremble—you turn pale."

"Could

"Could I help trembling—could I help turning pale—my God! had he not ſaid enough to awaken all that was irritable in my compoſition."

"You already ſurmiſe," continued the monk, "what I have not yet declared to you. Yes, you certainly anticipate that you are the daughter of ——."

"Oh, gracious Heaven!" I exclaimed, "is the Marquis de Ramais my father?"

"He was your father; he would have given worlds to embrace you—but the fatal ſiſters have long ago ſevered the thread of his exiſtence."

Donna Medina ſaw me falling to the ground, and ran to ſupport me; I was ſome minutes without recollection, when my ſenſes returned—my head reſted on her boſom—the monk retained one of my hands—it was wet with his tears.—I preſſed his to my lips, and begged, in a low voice, interrupted by ſobs, that for the love of God he would tell me if my

my adorable mother was yet living, and if he was informed in what country ſhe reſided.

He ſhook his head—it was a terrible omen; and my fears repreſented it even worſe than the reality; for though he could not tell me ſhe was living, neither had he any authority to aſcertain the contrary, becauſe he neither had ſeen nor heard any accounts of her ſince the death of my father.

This incertitude, which did not deprive me entirely of hope, was ſo much beyond my expectation, that I began to recover my compoſure, and eagerly entreated the benevolent monk to recommence the hiſtory that had been ſo wonderfully interrupted. But this I could not prevail on him to do till the next day, for having felt my pulſe, he aſſured me I had been more than enough agitated, and ſtood in need of repoſe—however, he ſtaid dinner with us, but retired immediately after, bidding me go to bed, that he might find me the next morning in a condition to give him a long audience; which, though

though painful to my feelings, was necessary to my welfare.

I had ventured to ask the good father, though he prohibited my speaking on the subject nearest my heart, by what accident he was enabled to unravel the mysteries of my birth?

"Upon that subject," said he, "I have no objection to give you immediate information; already I have told you by what means your sex was discovered at Dunkirk—of the pains taken by certain gentlemen resolved on tracing from whence you came, and to what family you belonged—this desire to know your origin made them go to every place where you had been before—they learnt all that happened to you at Mechlin—at Lisle, the first town in which you had taken up your abode, they hoped to hear still more, and were not mistaken; for, by some means or other, you was there the theme of general conversation—nobody appeared uninformed that you was born in the forest of Ardennes; that you owed the preservation of your life, as well as the cultivation of your mind,

mind, to a ſage ſolitary, who for many years inhabited that melancholy retreat: it was alſo deſcribed to them in what a ſtrange manner you fell into the hands of this venerable hermit—and theſe very people, after collecting ſo many of your concerns, returned to retail them again at Dunkirk. I then reſided in that town—I heard the marvellous tale as well as others—what ſeemed obſcure to them, was as clear to me as the light of Heaven—I put together all the circumſtances of your life, and knew you for the daughter of my reſpectable patron the Marquis de Ramais—from this time I was making perpetual inquiries—I heard of your marriage with Signor Roſmo—I followed you to Italy, but I came too late; you had departed with your huſband before my arrival, and it is only here that I was deſtined to meet with you.—I obſerved as you paſſed you looked at me—I ſuppoſed it a look of doubt from one who thought ſhe recollected me—the words you uttered to Donna Medina rouſed my curioſity—I turned back, and, as I examined your countenance, I recalled thoſe features that I had ſeen at Dunkirk, doubly impreſſed on my mind by my wiſh to find you

again,

again, and by the ſtriking reſemblance they bear to thoſe of your father."

This was all that he communicated at our firſt interview; the ſecond being more productive, I ſhall enter at once upon it, and finiſh the hiſtory he gave me of my parents without farther interruption.

"I was in my youth," ſaid the monk, "ſecretary to your father, but much more the confidant of his inclinations than the ſervant of his occaſions; in my ſoul he lodged the moſt ſecret of his thoughts, and I made room for them becauſe they were all ſtrictly honourable—Would to God that one fatal error, ſpringing from fancy and nouriſhed by ſenſibility, had not crept in amongſt his many virtues, and in ſome meaſure tarniſhed their brightneſs! It began in innocence, but ended in criminality.

"The Marquis de Ramais loved and was beloved by the only child and ſole heireſs of Baron de Preſle; her beauty, together with a fortune beyond ſplendid, attracted round her a multiplicity of admirers; ſome of

of taſte, but the greater number men who purſued only their own intereſt—At the head of this latter claſs was the Count de Reucourt—handſome—well-made—an Adonis in features, an Apollo in figure, but of a ſoul deformed and odious; proud of his birth, vain of his riches, he deſpiſed others who did not poſſeſs theſe advantages in the ſame proportion with himſelf; though violent in his deſires, cruel in their execution, yet his manners could take what form he pleaſed to give them; he could be mild or vindictive to exceſs when either of theſe extremes were to act as the guide to his wiſhes, and his heart was the throne of jealouſy, which emitted nothing from thence but its own infernal rays of ſuſpicion.—Such is the portrait of a a man whoſe perfidy has been the cauſe of what no doubt you have often thought, and with apparent good reaſon, to be cruelty in thoſe to whom you owe your being when they abandoned your helpleſs infancy to the damps of the earth, to the ſolitude of a foreſt, to the jaws of devouring animals; it is to juſtify your parents that I muſt afflict your too-ſenſible mind, by drawing back the dark

curtain

curtain that has hitherto concealed from your sight the bitterness of their misfortunes.

"This Count de Reucourt, who monstered human nature, was nevertheless extremely well received by Baron de Presle, who, like himself, paid homage to accidental advantages, for which the owner is more obliged to his progenitors than to his own deeds of glory or his own labours in the service of Fortune. The Baron saw with exultation that his daughter, however unwillingly, had inlisted the Count in her train of lovers; upon which observation he immediately concluded to accept him for a son-in-law, so that De Reucourt's passion had no difficulties to encounter except one, which of all others was the hardest to conquer, because it grew from Mademoiselle de Presle's indifference and rooted at the very bottom of her heart.

"The character of the Marquis de Ramais, your father and my master, was a perfect contrast to that of the Count; he was equally handsome, equally well made; he was liberal, affable, generous, untinctured by suspicion, full of wit, unrivalled in huma-

nity, and unequalled in valour—He adored Mademoiſelle de Preſle—he would have loved her with the ſame ardency, the ſame conſtancy, whether ſhe had been the child of poverty or the daughter of affluence; poſſeſſing every requiſite to charm; Mademoiſelle de Preſle's affections, which were no eaſy conqueſt to others, yielded to the powers of captivation centered in the Marquis—her father ſaw his merit as clearly as ſhe did, but the emotions it raiſed in the breaſt of either were totally different—ſhe beheld it with rapture, he conſidered it with diſguſt, becauſe it gave him the more obſtacles to ſurmount before he ſhould be able to make his refractory daughter give her hand to the Count; twenty thouſand a year, which one poſſeſſed more than the other, was too large a ſum not to ſtrike a balance greatly in favour of the latter, ſo that the Count gained an aſcendency over the father in proportion as the Marquis became more and more neceſſary to the happineſs of the daughter.

"She had for the confidante of her paſſion a very extraordinary young perſon named Mademoiſelle Peſteu; this girl comprehended that

that there muſt be a great deal of ſweetneſs in loving and being beloved, which made her look about for an amiable object who ſhe might inſpire with ſimilar ſentiments to thoſe which the Marquis acknowledged for her friend, and in the purſuit ſhe caſt her eyes indiſcriminately on all the men of her acquaintance, but found none who reſembled the Marquis, or that pleaſed her half ſo well; ſhe began to love him with violence, yet, being in their confidence, ſtruggled to ſuppreſs her paſſion, knowing that if ſhe indulged it and tried to ſupplant Mademoiſelle de Preſle in the heart of the Marquis ſhe ſhould bring diſhonour on herſelf; however, ſhe ſighed for him without being guilty either of treachery or deceit; ſhe made the beſt efforts in her power to baniſh his agreeable image from her thoughts; ſhe even fancied the difficult taſk was accompliſhed, but unfortunately the incaution of her friend in repreſenting the Marquis's tenderneſs juſt as ſhe came from an interview with him, ſpoke in terms ſo warm, in language ſo ecſtatic of the bliſsful moments ſhe paſſed in his ſociety, eſtabliſhed her weakneſs, and more than rekindled the

fire which ſhe vainly ſuppoſed her honourable exertions had totally extinguiſhed.

" What a rival did your mother make to herſelf by this too open communication of her happineſs, doubly redoubtable becauſe the Baron her father had long loved with extravagance the elegant, the beautiful, the inſenſible Peſteu; to his ſolicitations that ſhe would become Baroneſs de Preſle ſhe had ever been frigidly inſenſible, yet ſtill preſerved the influence his paſſion gave her over him; ſo that at the period of which I am ſpeaking your mother had to combat againſt the avarice of the Baron, the opulence of the Count, and the diſtracted fondneſs of a girl powerful in whatever ſhe choſe to undertake, who was yet balancing between honour and inclination, between principle and perfidy.—Mademoiſelle de Preſle was by no means ignorant of her father's predilection for this young lady; ſhe looked upon it with complacency, and deſired that ſhe might have accepted his propoſals if ſhe could have made them accord with her affections; ſo far from beholding with chagrin her father's ſubmiſſion to the will of this dear friend, ſhe con-

ſidered

ſidered it as a ſure means by which ſhe ſhould at laſt attain to the ſummit of her wiſhes and become the wife of the Marquis.

"What a dream was this, what a viſion had ſhe fallen into — it was only interrupted by the preſence of her father, who came to tell her that unleſs ſhe conſented immediately to eſpouſe the Count, he would ſhut her up in a convent and force her to take the veil, which cruel threat was given at the inſtigation of the Count himſelf, who ſometimes upbraided him for the ſuſpenſe he was made to endure; ſometimes conjured him to overcome by violence his daughter's mortifying repugnance; and on this occaſion he had worked him up to ſuch a pitch of wilfulneſs that he came to her apartment reſolved to triumph in ſpite of her reluctance. However certain as he imagined the means to be, he found himſelf miſtaken in the end for which he propoſed them; Mademoiſelle refuſed more firmly than ever to join her hand with that of the Count, adding, ſhe infinitely preferred a convent and the veil to a marriage at which her ſoul revolted with horror. On this decided declaration the Baron drove her from

his prefence, when ſhe went to find Peſteu to entreat that ſhe would uſe her intereſt to calm the tranſports of her father; a requeſt with which ſhe did not comply, but pretending to do ſo, ſhe turned her influence quite a contrary way, thereby very much increaſing his obſtinacy, and keeping him ſteadily to his ſentence of ſhutting her up for life, except in the mean time ſhe ſhould change thoſe ſentiments that diſpleaſed him.

"The Marquis, in deſpair at the harſh meaſures which threatened to deprive him of his adored miſtreſs, aſked for an audience of Mademoiſelle Peſteu, and in her preſent intoxication he could have aſked nothing that ſhe would have granted with greater readineſs—to ſee him—to hear him ſpeak, was exquiſite bliſs, and ſhe would have purchaſed his preſence at any price ſhort of renouncing him for ever.

"The derangement of his appearance, and a certain wildneſs of expreſſion that ſparkled in his eyes as he preſented himſelf before her, made her turn pale, nor did his words contribute to her recompoſure.

"Mademoiſelle

"Mademoiſelle Peſteu," ſaid he, "you govern the mind of the Baron, and it is to you that I bring my woes — it is only you that can aſſuage them, by prevailing on him to reverſe the deadful ſentence of his daughter's baniſhment — you know our love for each other—you have encouraged it—for the ſake of Heaven give it ſtill your protection, and avert from us the blow by which we are threatened."

"Already," replied ſhe peeviſhly, "I have ſpoken to the Baron — he will not turn aſide from his purpoſe—what does it ſignify to be always teazing people when they will not liſten to one — ſuppoſe I ſhould try another application, he is ſo incorrigibly ſtubborn, aſſure yourſelf it would anſwer no manner of purpoſe but to add to the inflammation of his rage."

"How coldly you ſpeak," cried he, "on a ſubject that drives me to madneſs — adviſe me what is to be done — what can I do? — Ah! Marquis, there is but one road that you have to purſue — I dare not point it out—ſhe muſt be the wife of the Count de Reucourt—

ſhe can no longer reſiſt the authoritative commands of her father—Periſh the Count!—Periſh the Baron!—Periſh the univerſe before I will reſign my treaſure to the arms of a rival—No, Mademoiſelle! No!—I ſee how it is—I ſee you no longer intereſt yourſelf in the fate of two wretches who exiſt but for each other, though you can calmly look on and ſee them torn aſunder—ſee them dragged to the execution of their hopes, without extending a finger to ſave them from beholding the inhuman ſacrifice!"

"Graceful even in terrors, Peſteu thought ſhe had never before ſeen him half ſo charming as he appeared in this delirium of tender frenzy, and her envy of a fortunate rival increaſed with her admiration of the miſerable Marquis, ſo that ſhe made no defence of her conduct, but let him go away diſguſted by her want of ſympathy rather than promiſe him her aſſiſtance in the way he had demanded it.

"Ah!" cried ſhe, as ſoon as he was gone, "who knows but whilſt Mademoiſelle Preſle is ſhut up in her convent I may find my way

to

to the valuable heart of her lover—when he can ſee her no more he will certainly forget her—I ſhall not then ſcruple to unfold thoſe ſentiments to him with which he has inſpired me—he muſt be grateful—it is poſſible he may be tender—what then will there be wanting to complete my felicity?"

"The Baron having a thouſand times re-urged his commands and repeated his menaces without being able to ſhake the virtuous ſteadineſs of his daughter's firſt attachment in favour of a ſecond, at laſt put his threats in force, and placed her in a convent. —It was when Peſteu ſaw the amiable ſufferer borne from the houſe of her father to be entombed a living ſacrifice to avarice, caprice, and ſome little treachery, of which ſhe could not help accuſing herſelf—it was then that ſhe let fall ſome tears of remorſe—it was then that a new train of ideas entered her boſom.

"My God! what is it that I have done?" ſhe exclaimed—"Ruined the perſon I have loved from infancy!—And for what?—To rob her of a heart that will never be mine—Ah! why

why does my repoſe build on the misfortunes of my friend?—Why am I compelled to adore a man who has no ſentiment for me, who ought to have no ſentiment for me but hatred—Yes, I deſpiſe myſelf for wronging him—how then muſt he who I have injured deſpiſe me—Love has conquered—I ſin againſt all the attributes of juſtice, yet I ſin alſo againſt my inclinations."

"Before ſhe had concluded the laſt word the Marquis ruſhed into her apartment; he was juſt informed of Mademoiſelle de Preſle's ſituation, and the news had driven him to deſperation.

"You have undone me," he cried—"you have acted with the tyrant Baron—you favour the infamous Count—you baniſh the miſtreſs of my ſoul—you aſſaſſinate my ſenſes—you bring me to the gates of diſtraction—unknit this web of miſchief—undo this deed of horror, or anſwer to Heaven for the general deſtruction it will occaſion!"

"This one would have thought a moment ill adapted to withdraw his heart from a firſt

love

love where it was ſo deeply rooted, and to fill it with the ſame ſentiments for another; yet her agitation, her confuſion, her fears that ſhe might never again find an opportunity to make one ſingle trial, hurried her into the abſurdity of pleading her own cauſe, which ſhe began by exculpating herſelf from all the charges of cruelty produced againſt her—ſhe avowed her deteſtation of the Count, and made a merit of the many good offices ſhe had endeavoured to render them with the Baron.

"It is not my fault," ſaid ſhe, "that they have not been effectual; neither can I give you the conſolation of telling you that I believe it will ever be poſſible to make him change his reſolves."

"With a modeſt and tender diffidence ſhe ventured to raiſe her eyes to his face whilſt her own was ſuffuſed with tears; ſhe ſaw that his features relaxed a little from the ſeverity that alarmed her, which gave her courage to proceed.

"My

"My dear Marquis," ſhe continued, again caſting her looks on the ground to conceal her bluſhes," you do not ſuſpect how tenderly my heart is concerned in your diſtreſſes, how dearly it ſympatizes even in your imaginary misfortunes—allow me to ſpeak to you in this language, for when a diſappointment is really irretrievable, a great deal of the immediate grief we are too apt to expreſs certainly ariſes from the blindneſs of imagination, which prevents our ſeeing the good it may eventually produce—for inſtance, you think your felicity depends on being the huſband of Mademoiſelle de Preſle, and had there not been inſuperable bars to your union, no doubt your choice of her was extremely well directed—I repeat ſhe never can be yours—but I do not tell you there is no other object in the world, unimpeded by obſtacles, no inſurmountable difficulties to get over, with whom you muſt ſucceed—with whom you may be equally happy."

"Never, never," exclaimed he, interrupting her; "never will I be the huſband of any woman but Mademoiſelle de Preſle, and

that

that day that unites her deſtiny to another ſhall be the laſt of my life."

"Mademoiſelle Peſteu tried to hide the chagrin as well as alarm that took poſſeſſion of her mind on hearing him ſpeak in ſo determined a tone, and replied with ſeeming compoſure,

"Though I do not diſapprove of your paſſion, I condemn your deſpair—ſhe who has given it birth will alſo condemn it—think not becauſe my friend is conſtrained by paternal authority to marry the Count that your death will be no augmentation to her miſery; on the contrary, if you wiſh that ſhe ſhould not be the victim of multiplied woes, preſerve not only your perſonal ſafety, but, if poſſible, preſerve alſo your happineſs—if ſhe could ſpeak to you ſhe would implore you for her own ſake to make the ſacrifice of your heart to ſome new attachment—you would certainly obey her commands—you would try what balſam might be extracted from affections not kindled by herſelf—make but the experiment, dearest Marquis—Ah! you will find it full of

ſweetneſs—

ſweetneſs—I have ſaid too much, yet I have not ſaid enough—behold all diſguiſe ſtripped from my heart, and behold it all your own!"

"The Marquis, after this plain avowal, was no longer to look for the ſource from whence rolled the torrent of his overwhelming miſfortunes—at one glance he ſaw them proceeding from the influence with which ſhe governed the Baron; but ſtifling the emotions of rage that devoured him, from which he could expect no good conſequences, he reſolved to aſſail her on the ſide of compaſſion.

"Ah! pity," cried he, falling on his knees before her, "pity an unfortunate, diſtracted culprit, who, ignorant of your ſentiments, dared to diſpoſe of his inclinations before he knew you would have cheriſhed them—do not puniſh in him a crime of which his fate only is guilty—do not profit by the aſcendency you hold over the mind of the Baron to rob of more than exiſtence the man who, whilſt ſenſible of all your charms, all your perfections, finds that he is bound to another by ties which death only can diſſolve—Judge of my feelings by your own—

with

with what coldneſs do you liſten to the Baron's entreaties—with what warmth of ſentiment do you honour the wretch before you—by what paſſes in your mind you will know how little we have the command over our paſſions—you would not hate the Baron but with the conſent of your heart—neither would you love an ingrate if you could help it—remember the friendſhip you have ſworn to Mademoiſelle de Preſle—think of the kindneſs with which you firſt cheriſhed our mutual fondneſs—of the vows you have heard us utter to live but for each other—and, ah! do not forget the promiſes you then made to protect our innocent affection—No," added he, "you have not forgotten—you are ſtill ready to ratify thoſe obliging promiſes—you will inſtantly go to the Baron—you will plead for the object of his condemnation—you will prevail over his reluctance, and we ſhall at laſt owe the completion of our happineſs to your bounty."

"The young Peſteu, who had in her compoſition ſtrong and oppoſite propenſities, that ſometimes inclined her to good, ſometimes to evil, liſtened patiently enough to his rhapſody,

ſody, becauſe ſhe found in it a ſort of food for her vanity, though nothing that could cheriſh her hopes—ſhe did more; ſhe ſtrove with her affections to gain a victory over them; but this was not the work of a moment—and the anſwer ſhe returned to the Marquis was ſo ambiguous, ſo unſatisfactory, that he fled from her in a paroxyſm of fury, uttering a thouſand imprecations on the duplicity of her conduct.

Plunged in agony by his abrupt departure, ſhe called to make him return, but he fled with ſo much precipitation that her cries did not reach him.

"Ah!" ſaid ſhe, throwing herſelf on a ſofa, weeping abundantly, "he is gone—perhaps for ever—perhaps to fall by his own hand—Where is the happy termination with which I have flattered myſelf?—Is it to kill the Marquis?—Is it to deſtroy the moſt amiable of mankind that I humble my honour to the duſt?—Ah! no; this muſt not be—Live, adorable Marquis!—Live, and let thy curſes on my cruelty be changed to bleſ-

ſings

ſings for the ſervices I ſhall hereafter render thee."

"The Baron, who every day grew more and more devoted to the charms of Mademoiſelle Peſteu, could ſcarce exiſt out of her preſence; he had not ſeen her for ſeveral hours, which brought him to her houſe at a time ſhe did not expect him, and when ſhe was leſs than ever inclined to hear him con over his long catalogue of ardours: ſhe received him with extreme coldneſs—he began as uſual to complain of his unfortunate ſtars, which forced him to adore a charming object who would beſtow on him nothing but indifference.

"I cannot, it is true," ſaid he, "offer to your acceptance a youthful huſband; but my birth, my rank, the large fortune I poſſeſs, and my eternal tenderneſs, will not theſe advantages make you for a moment forget the diſparity in our years—it requires but a moment's lenity to ſay you will be mine—though you do not condeſcend to return my paſſion—though you feel no love for my perſon—like at leaſt the ſplendours

that are mine, partake them with me, and I ſhall be ſatisfied."

"All this time Mademoiſelle Peſteu, without attending to his diſcourſe, was buried in reflections; ſhe thought only of the abſent Marquis, of what ſacrifice ſhe ſhould make to regain his friendſhip, and her own good opinion, which ſhe now painfully acknowledged, had been long forfeited to her predilection for the lover of her friend.

"The Baron, aſtoniſhed at her ſilence, and the ſombre reverie into which ſhe had plunged herſelf, began to ſuſpect that another occupied the thoughts, perhaps the heart, of his miſtreſs. He looked more earneſtly in her face, he ſaw ſhe had been weeping; he obſerved the Marquis, as he entered, only a few paces from her door: he did not, indeed, ſee him come out of it, yet his being in the ſame ſtreet was a ſtrong preſumptive proof that he had made her a viſit. How eaſy the tranſition to ſuppoſe that he was alſo a favourite viſitor: he ſighed—he named his rival, his too happy rival—and the confuſion, the embarraſſment of Mademoiſelle Peſteu,

Pesteu, explained to him that he was not mistaken. Hating him sufficiently before on the score of his daughter, her hatred was augmented by this new discovery to the most frightful magnitude; the change in his voice and countenance did not escape the observation of the agitated Lady; neither was the cause of it concealed from her penetration. She summoned to her aid all that was great, noble, and virtuous that belonged to her nature, though lately obscured by the errors of passion; she rallied her cowardly spirits to make one grand effort against herself, which might atone for all the faults she had committed. Full of this generous resolution she told the Baron, if he ever hoped to possess her hand, he must bestow that of his daughter on the Marquis de Ramais.

"Strange proposal!" cried the Baron; "do you ask me to give her to your lover and to my rival?"

"No!" said she, "whatever are my sentiments of the Marquis, he is not my lover, he will never be my lover—give

him the wife I require for him, it is the only means you can take to preside in my heart without having him for your rival."

"The Baron, though dying for love, could not hear these conditions without being petrified by them; he was even more piqued, more enraged, more confounded, than if she had sworn never to be his on any conditions.

"No, Madame," said he, "since it is your pleasure that I should owe your favour and my happiness to a secondary consideration.——My God! to your acknowledged love for De Ramais, to whose views you would sacrifice my honour, your own, and that of my daughter; since you cannot condescend to receive my vows on less humiliating terms, it is time I should convince you that the power love has given you over me, when too much abused, can be recalled to its original post.—No, Mademoiselle—no, if you do not receive me on my own interest, you shall not accept me for the sake of your favourite; neither shall he ever be

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the husband of Mademoiselle de Presle, unless I give my consent merely to revenge on you the insult with which you affront me: for, depend on it, the deepest daggers I could plant in your heart would be to grant the possession of my daughter to the Marquis. I tell you I could confer no greater misery on you; for which single reason I may possibly take your request into consideration, but without annexing to it the vast reward with which you would have bribed me."

"These words were pronounced with a sneer; then adding that she must apologise to herself for the shortness of his visit, he left her to rejoice over her own virtuous exertions, and, perhaps, not to grieve that at any rate the surly Baron had resisted her importunities.

"Whilst she is resolved to persist in fighting against her own inclinations, which were beginning to rebel on finding the Baron so fortunately disposed for opposition, let us leave her to the battle, and speak of those in whose fate we are more deeply interested.

"As the Marquis was flying with diſguſt from the ſight of Mademoiſelle Peſteu, he encountered, by chance, a ſervant belonging to the Baron, who formerly lived with himſelf, which man, having attended his young lady to the convent, was both able and ready to give his *ci-devant* maſter a direction where he might find her, upon which he formed a deſign of going to her retreat, and ſeeing her if it were poſſible.

"He loved me," continued the Monk—"he knew I was diſcreet—he knew I would lay down my life in his ſervice—he ſpoke to me of his intentions—I tried to diſſuade him from a purpoſe which appeared to me replete with danger; but finding he did not attend to my arguments with his accuſtomed goodneſs, I ſupplicated that he would let me be the companion of his undertaking; at firſt he refuſed, but afterwards conſented to take me with him."

"Love, perhaps, had divined our approach to Mademoiſelle de Preſle, for ſhe ſtood at one of the windows as we paſſed by her convent; at ſight of the beautiful young lady

lady I feared my maſter would have betrayed himſelf to the obſervation of others, nor were the tranſports ſhe evinced at beholding him under any better conſtraint. The Marquis ſtopped his horſe that he might indulge the delight of gazing on her—he did more, he diſmounted, he bent one knee to the ground, and though ſhe could not hear his words, ſhe might diſcover by his action, by his attitude, in ſhort, by the fervency of his whole deportment, that the vows he uttered to Heaven had only herſelf for its object. She ſhewed how ſenſible ſhe was of this truth by following his example; ſhe bent her body with devotional awe, ſhe looked upon her lover, laid her hands upon her heart, then raiſed them upwards, ſeeming by her geſtures to make regular reſponſives to his oaths of everlaſting conſtancy.—God knows when the tender ſcene would have cloſed, had not Mademoiſelle ſuddenly ſhut the window, and retired from it in great haſte, as if ſhe had heard the footſtep of ſomebody coming to ſurpriſe her. I had, after ſhe diſappeared, no great difficulty in perſuading the Marquis to proceed forward, when, in a few minutes, we ſtopped again

at a houſe of reception near the convent, where he paſſed the reſt of that day and part of the next in laying plans how to gain one interview, which at laſt were moſt unfortunately, but too well carried into execution.

"On the ſecond evening my maſter let me know he ſhould be in the apartment of Mademoiſelle de Preſle at the hour of midnight.

"You muſt go with me," ſaid he, "I ſhall have occaſion for your aſſiſtance, to aid me in a projection, on the ſucceſs of which the felicity of my life is entirely dependent."

"As he did not explain the nature of this projection, I concluded that he intended to carry off his miſtreſs from the convent, and, dangerous as ſuch an enterprize muſt have been, I obeyed his commands with a great deal of readineſs, becauſe I ſaw it was only the poſſeſſion of her by which his paſſions were reducible to the dominion of reaſon; but the impoſſibility of taking her from thence did not occur to me till we had reached Mademoiſelle's chamber, through a train of difficulties that threatened deſtruction

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to ourſelves, and which no Amazon, much leſs a delicate woman, could have encountered; we having got them over at the riſk of our lives, were admitted even into the chamber of the fair priſoner. Her woman, who was the abettor of this interview, opened the door of an adjacent apartment, where I waited without intruding on the lovers till they ſhould call for me to ſignify their commands, which I determined to obey, though it ſhould coſt me my exiſtence.

"They did not make me wait long before the Marquis ſoftly opened the door, beckoning me with his finger to approach. I found Mademoiſelle de Preſle drowned in her tears; as ſhe looked at me ſhe caſt a handkerchief over her face, and ſaid to my maſter, who had again taken his ſtation at her feet,

"Dear, but cruel Marquis, what is it that you expect of me? and why is this ſtranger to be made the witneſs of my guilty compliance?"

"Ah!"

"Ah!" call it not guilty," he replied; "the presence of my friend, when we plight our vows to each other, will render them sacred."

"Had I been in orders at that time, with what joy should I have performed the holy ceremony; but though no priest, I was a man of honour, of principle, I started at the proposition of being made agent on a business in which neither honour nor principle had any share, where the madness of inclination took upon itself the whole government.

"I signified my horror at a profanation so glaring; I fell at the knees of my enraged master, and, without dread of his displeasure, besought him not to persist in doing a deed which he might assure himself would be visited on all parties with divine inflictions of vengeance.

"Fire flashed from the Marquis's eyes; he lifted up his hand to strike me, but Mademoiselle de Presle prevented the blow, and took

took my ſide of the queſtion ſo heartily, that I thought between us we ſhould at laſt have gained a victory over his ill-directed paſſions. Alas! how far from conqueſt is ſubmiſſion — he drew a piſtol from his pocket, he aimed it at his heart.

"This, Madame," ſaid he, "ſhall end my troubles at one blow, if you withdraw the promiſe I exacted ſo reluctantly from you before the intruſion of this preaching blockhead; let him join our hands, let him pronounce the ceremony of marriage over us, which God will ratify, or prepare yourſelf to ſee me ruſh unbidden into his awful preſence."

"You leave me no choice," ſaid ſhe; "put up that terrible inſtrument of death, and, if I fall to ſave you from perdition, ſurely Heaven will pardon a crime that does not proceed from levity, but owes its ſource to compaſſion."

"At this moment I think I would almoſt have given my ſoul to have prevented him from playing the deſperate ſtake at which he

he had ſet his own — if he dies he cannot, if he lives he may repent; ſuch was the idea that impreſſed my agitated mind, in the moſt terrific, the moſt miſerable moment I have ever experienced, when he led Mademoiſelle de Preſle more dead than alive to the foot of the altar in the convent's chapel at an hour when all was ſilent, commanding me to follow. I forgot every thing but the danger I had ſeen him expoſed to by his own raſhneſs, and performed that fatal ceremony, rendered doubly ſacrilegious by the full conviction of the heinous crime to which I had aſſented againſt the cries of my conſcience, which penitence and remorſe have not in twenty-five years been able to ſilence; though praiſed be the mercies of Heaven, its voice no longer fills me with terrors, it ſpeaks to me only in whiſpers, its tones are the tones of mercy, and bids me hope that the deadly ſin I committed, in uniting the Marquis de Ramais to Mademoiſelle de Preſle, is blotted from the book of Heaven."

When the pious Monk came to this period of his pathetic hiſtory, I roſe from my chair, without ſpeaking ran out of the room, and

ſhut

ſhut myſelf up in another till I had in part eaſed my breaking heart of the burden it began to collect from the moment when my father entered the convent, and by the time I returned back to my friends, I diſcovered by the redneſs of their eyes that their employment had not been very unſimilar to my own.

Donna Medina caught hold of my hand, which ſhe ſilently carried to her lips; the other I held out to the Monk, who ſaid, as he gently preſſed it between his, "I receive it, my dear daughter, as the pledge of your forgiveneſs."

"Oh!" cried I, "you entitle yourſelf to my veneration—all I can give you is my duty, my love, and my eſteem, will you accept them as a poor recompence for the goodneſs you have ſhewn to my parents?"

He made me the tendereſt reply that can be imagined; but when I preſſed him to proceed with the memoir my weakneſs had interrupted, he made ſome ſmall delays, that I might be a little more ſtrengthened to ſup-

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port the conflicts which were yet in ſtore for me. I was obliged to ſubmit; dinner was announced; we ſat down to table, and, as ſoon as the ſervants were withdrawn, the good Monk recommenced his melancholy narrative.

"The unſanctimonious ceremony (ſaid he) being ended, I did not ſtay to pollute my ſight with the guilty joys of the poor ſelf-deluded, but tranſported lovers. I fled from them; I would have fled from the horrors of my own thoughts, had ſuch an eſcape been poſſible; but, no, I was obliged to carry theſe deteſtable companions with me wherever I went. I waited for the Marquis at our inn till the next day, when he joined me, but the moſt altered, the moſt happy man in the world. He ſeemed to have loſt all recollection of my preſumption in oppoſing his inclinations; he embraced me a hundred times, talked of nothing but his enchanting bride, and called her his wife with as much confidence as if their hands had been united by a Biſhop, as if none of the forms which conſtitute this Holy Sacrament had been omitted. I was forced to liſten to his raptures,

tures, but every one of them was a dagger that ſtabbed me to the ſoul — how unlike the warmth which flowed in his veins was the chill, unequal motion of life that crept through mine; he was all animation, I all ſtupidity. He ſignified to me that he ſhould remain a day or two longer in hopes of another interview with her, who he perſiſted in his error of calling the Marchioneſs de Ramais, but entreated me to return home that neither the Baron or the Count might have occaſion to ſurmiſe the cauſe of his abſence, as it would, he ſaid, be in my power to make up ſome report that would quiet their ſuſpicions, if they had already imbibed them.

"As I had now no motive for exerciſing the ſpirit of reſiſtance, I ſhould certainly have obeyed his command readily enough, but moſt unluckily he changed his mind, and now it was determined that we were to ſet out together with the greateſt expedition, becauſe he juſt then recollected, that if queſtioned, the ſervant who gave him intimation of Mademoiſelle's convent might betray to the Baron what he had done, of courſe ſubject him to a premature diſcovery of facts.

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We were not many minutes preparing for our journey, and though I never remember to have ſeen the Marquis in better ſpirits, yet he talked eternally of the Count, even with greater rancour than he ſeemed to ſpeak of him before he thought himſelf the huſband of Mademoiſelle de Preſle.

"He made me ride cloſe at his ſide that he might loſe no moment which preſented an opportunity of talking to me either of his miſtreſs, or his rival; he happening to be ſpeaking of the latter, when, eagerly interrupting himſelf, he cried out——

"There he is!—there is the only bar to my good fortune!—there is the curſed Reucourt—I will deliver my wife from his power, or I will periſh by his hand!"

"He diſmounted, regardleſs of all I could ſay to prevent him, and waited the Count's approach, with his ſword half drawn from the ſcabbard; the other, ſeeing him thus prepared for his reception, was ſoon upon his feet. They fought like men determined on death; to endeavour at parting them would

would have been to as little purpoſe as to bid the ocean be ſtill, or the wind to ceaſe blowing. I made the experiment once at the riſk of my life, for the ſwords of both were immediately pointed againſt me, ſo that I let them continue their ſport without farther interruption. After a conteſt of ſeveral minutes the furious Marquis gave his enemy two blows, one of which made him ſtagger, the other ſent him to meaſure his length upon the earth. I aſſiſted my maſter to examine the Count's wounds; they not only appeared to be mortal, but the ſtroke of mortality ſeemed to have done all that it was capable of doing, no ſymptom of exiſtence remained to prove the contrary.

"By ſome chance or other the Count came abroad that day without attendants; the Marquis, for evident reaſons, had taken no ſervant with him but myſelf; nobody witneſſed the rencounter; our ſecret was yet ſafe, it was our buſineſs to keep it ſo, and leaving what we ſuppoſed to be the Count's corpſe to take care of itſelf, we found ourſelves quietly at home without our abſence having created any ſuſpicion, or without letting any per-

ſon know what road we had taken; but attend now to a moſt extraordinary revolution, which none of us had any reaſon to expect.

"During our excurſion to the convent, the baron having entered into a communication with his heart on the ſubject of Mademoiſelle Peſteu, it told him plainly it would never be at eaſe, except it was reconciled to its former ſentiments for that lady, and reſtored to her poſſeſſion; he had too good cauſe to believe the truth of this remonſtrance; he therefore went directly to her houſe, renewed his overtures on her own conditions, offering, if ſhe would be his, to give his daughter the Marquis de Ramais for her huſband.

"At firſt the propoſal ſhocked the unprepared mind of Mademoiſelle, becauſe ſhe had flattered herſelf, after being repulſed on her former attack, ſhe ſhould not have the diſcomfort to ſee him the huſband of any woman, which in her opinion was a thouſand times worſe than if ſhe was never to behold him more, yet know that he remained ſingle. However, as the baron had given her the example of a ſacrifice, in conſenting to the union

union he abhorred, ſhe repeated her promiſe to let her marriage with him follow that of Mademoiſelle Preſle with the Marquis de Ramais.

"Having expreſſed a great deal of gratitude for this condeſcenſion, the baron ſat out immediately to take his daughter from the convent; but on his road thither, obſerving a bloody corpſe ſtretched on the ground, he alighted from his carriage—ſaw with aſtoniſhment that it was Count de Reucourt: he fancied there yet remained ſome warmth in the body; he had him placed in his coach, and carried him back into the town, where he not only ſoon revived, but was able to make a diſcovery of the perſon who left him in that bloody condition.

"A friend of the marquis came to tell him the neceſſity he was under of abſconding, the wounded man having baſely accuſed him with intentional murder, by aſſaſſination, for which he would certainly be condemned to an ignominious execution, unleſs he had the good fortune to eſcape the clutches of the count's family, who, as well as the baron,

were determined to punish him with all the rancour of law.

"The loss of his own life would have weighed lightly in the balance of my master's determination at this perilous juncture; but what turned the scale in favour of immediate flight was, that in the first instance he should be separated for ever from his suppositious wife—in the second, time and circumstances may reunite them under more fortunate auspices: thus decided, he fled with precipitation. I attended him; we were lucky in getting to the sea coast, without annoyance: from thence we proceeded to Britain, where, though we felt ourselves secure, however, we were no enviable objects of felicity; the marquis became a prey to melancholy forebodings, which were not without foundation—for my part, what I felt for the danger of his situation was something more terrible than mere forebodings, because I too plainly traced the hand of Heaven already stretched out to avenge the crimes he had so recently committed against its sacred institutions.

"The

"The intelligence by which I afterwards learnt what in the meantime was carrying on in our own country, was gained through the channel of Mademoiſelle de Preſle's woman; it was dreadful enough, yet I am under the neceſſity of relating the ſad particulars.

"The baron, enraged that my maſter had ſecured his ſafety, occupied the whole of his attention in adminiſtering to the recovery of the count, whoſe wounds every day put on a more promiſing aſpect; but what perhaps haſtened his cure more than the ſkill of his ſurgeons, or the medicines they gave him, were the ſolemn imprecations by which the baron bound himſelf, that as ſoon as his wounds were healed he ſhould be the huſband of Mademoiſelle de Preſle, though the next moment ſhe were deſtined to expire at the foot of the altar.

"Savage promiſe! none but a ſavage would have made it—none but a brute would have accepted it."

"The few moments the old lover could ſpare from attending on his future ſon-in-

law were ſpent at the feet of his own deſtined bride; but ſhe, oppreſſed with ſorrow for the peril of him ſhe loved, would hardly liſten to the remonſtrances of him ſhe hated—in vain he urged the ſtrictneſs of her engagement to marry him on certain conditions, which conditions he had amply fulfilled.

"Am I," ſaid he, "to ſuffer, becauſe the marquis is forced to preſerve his forfeited life by a ſcandalous flight from the graſp of juſtice?—Am I to be anſwerable for his conduct?—Am I to be puniſhed for his crimes?—Be more conſiſtent with your own character—be more juſt to my happineſs, I beſeech you, Mademoiſelle."

"But Mademoiſelle would be neither one nor the other—ſhe left him to proſe on with his own ſhadow, her apartment being hung round with looking glaſs. She fancied the marquis might yet be concealed in the town; ſhe wiſhed to offer him an aſylum—ſhe went every where to ſeek for him—her inquiries ended in the certainty that he had abſconded to another country, and her hopes of ever

ſeeing

ſeeing him again were entirely vanquiſhed—but not ſo her ſorrows, which were very much augmented by the baron's artful management, who, to make the conqueſt of his miſtreſs the more eaſy, cauſed it in a few days to be reported, that the marquis was dead, and that accounts of his death had been received by his family, who thought it beſt to ſuppreſs them, as they would only throw new diſgrace on his memory—but far from anſwering the end propoſed by the baron, Mademoiſelle Peſteu, in a fit of deſpair, ſhut herſelf up in a convent, from which ſhe never again re-entered the world.

"None of thoſe calamitous tranſactions that were paſſing at a diſtance from Mademoiſelle de Preſle had penetrated the walls of her ſolitude—yet her heart was torn with anguiſh at the apparent neglect of the marquis—ſhe thought him faithleſs—ſhe lamented his inconſtancy—ſhe wept—ſhe ſighed—ſhe ſent to him letter after letter—but alas! he did not ſee her tears! he did not hear her ſighs—he could not anſwer her letters, becauſe he never received them—by the treachery of a nun they were conveyed to the hands of her

father; he ſtifling his rage at the diſhonour ſhe had brought upon her family, as well as his knowledge of it, became every day more anxious than before to repair her diſgrace in the beſt manner he could, by haſtening her union with the count, who being now in a ſtate of convaleſcence, waited with equal impatience for the completion of his title to the baron's immenſe riches, by forcing the hand of his beautiful daughter.

"Every thing being prepared for her deſtruction, the baron went in perſon to take her out of confinement; the languid ſtate, to which unceaſing grief and internal vexation had reduced her, filled his ſoul with no other ſenſation than that of vengeance; yet he pretended a great deal of kindneſs for her—thought of every convenience that could render her journey commodious, and commanded her woman to follow the next day with her lady's clothes, who would return no more to the convent—he aſſiſted her to his carriage, tenderly placed her in it, and with her pale cheek reſting on his ſhoulder they travelled ſome minutes in unbroken ſilence.

"The

"The cunning baron at length addreſſed her after this manner:

"My poor child, why is it that you grieve me, by indulging this deplorable melancholy for the loſs of a lover, ſo diſagreeable to your father—ſo unworthy of you."

"This too juſt reproach, as ſhe believed it to be, rouſed her from the torpor of ſorrowing meditation; and ſhe exclaimed—

"Ah! my dear father! you do not ſuſpect how ſtrongly my heart is united to the Marquis de Ramais—I know it is of him that you are ſpeaking—for my ſake do not think hardly of him: he cannot be unworthy—he cannot be inconſtant. Oh! Sir, ſay not that the Marquis de Ramais is inconſtant!"

"The baron knit his brows, bit his lips, and would have ſtruck her dead with the lightning of his eyes, if a mild external had not better aſſorted with his execrable purpoſe; he therefore only replied with as little ſhew of reſentment as his paſſions were able to command.

"I for-

"I forgive you," ſaid he, "for having beſtowed your affection adverſe to my directions. I pardon this preſumption, becauſe you can no longer offend me—except you ſpoil thoſe charms ſtill eſtimated by Count de Reucourt, in weeping for him who has paſſed that bourn from whence no traveller returns—ſhould you render yourſelf diſguſting to the friend of your father, by any longer weeping for the death of the marquis, ſuch an offence will blot you from my heart for ever."

"Poor Mademoiſelle de Preſle uttered a loud cry on hearing the death of her lover ſo unfeelingly announced—ſhe continued ſcreaming ſome ſeconds, and then ſunk down lifeleſs by the ſide of the baron, who, far from endeavouring to recover her, took the opportunity of her fainting to contemplate her figure—he drew aſide the cloke in which ſhe had wrapped herſelf, and ſaw, or fancied he ſaw, that if he would conceal the diſgrace of his family, no time was to be loſt in completing her marriage with the count. This was partly true, partly fancy; her ſituation

was

was what he ſuppoſed it to be, but the appearances were not really viſible.

"During the continuation of their ſhort journey ſhe ſometimes opened her eyes, but not her lips; theſe were pale and livid, thoſe like two fountains of water, whoſe reſervoirs could never be exhauſted. The baron neither upbraided nor conſoled her, but having conducted her to his own houſe, left her to the care of the ſervants, whilſt he went himſelf to arm the count for a change he might not expect to find in the charms of his miſtreſs, which were ſo much impaired by exceſſive grief, that he trembled leſt, after all the pains he had taken, he ſhould not be able to procure him for a ſon-in-law.

"How little occaſion would he have found for thoſe fears, had he known the count better—that patient lover, ſo far from retracting, heard unmoved all theſe tears numbered which ſhe had ſhed for the ſuppoſed death of his rival: beſides, he expreſſed ſo much impatience to become her huſband, that before they ſeparated, the next day was appointed for the celebration of thoſe deteſtable nuptials,

nuptials, which were eventually to tear thee, my child, from the agonized bosom of maternal fondness.

"Ah! no, no!" cried I, vehemently, "this cannot be! my mother could not—O no, she would not marry the count!"

"Yes! it is too true," replied the monk; alas! your mother was not to blame—her hand was forced into the count's, and the ceremony read over them whilst she was in no state to resist the violence of her oppressors; and when she did recover her senses, they suffered a temporary derangement on being told she was the wife of Count de Reucourt."

"Good God!" I exclaimed, "my poor father! what became of my poor father!"

"The news," said he, "of this infernal marriage, did not reach him till the time of your birth nearly approached; it was kept so extremely private for many months, that few people knew of it; and when it was told the marquis, if I had not been near his per-

son,

ſon, he would have ended his life and his misfortunes together. I prevented this worſt of evils by conſenting to every thing he required of me, and we left England to reviſit our own country."

"The haughty ſpoiler having accompliſhed the theft of a hand, which would never have been voluntarily preſented to him, bore away his woe-worn counteſs to one of his ſeats at a conſiderable diſtance, where, during a long fit of delirium, he concealed her from all obſervation but his own, waiting upon her with ſo much aſſiduity, ſo much tenderneſs, that on the full reſtoration of her ſenſes, knowing there could now be no redreſs for the injuries ſhe had ſuſtained, ſhe ſmothered the abhorrence his preſence gave her—ſhe even endeavoured, from a ſentiment of gratitude, to refrain from thoſe upbraidings with which her heart was burſting; and though ſhe could not be kind, ſhe tried to be civil to him.

"In this ſtate was your unfortunate mother; when arriving at home, and finding to what place ſhe had been conveyed, the marquis, your

your father, without letting me know the nature of his intentions, got himſelf lodged in a mean houſe near her abode, from whence he ſeveral times caught a glimpſe of her figure from the windows of the château, or in a beautiful park that ſurrounded it, where ſhe delighted to walk when the count was abſent, which ſince her recovery happened frequently, as he had a rage for hunting, and feared no rivals in that remote ſituation.

"The marquis at firſt was ſatisfied with contemplating the counteſs at a diſtance; he did not yet know that any report had been circulated of his death, much leſs did he apprehend that ſhe was this ſecond time a wife by compulſion; but regarding her as an abandoned woman, who ſcorned the vows which he reſpected, who broke them to indulge the caprice of her inclinations; her ſight created nothing but fury in his boſom.—Alas! that very fury was love! yet for many days it prevented him from ſhewing himſelf in her preſence.

"A week

"A week had elapſed, my maſter was ſtill abſent—I knew not whither he was gone—yet his long ſtay filled me with alarms. By knowing the caſtle where the count with his family reſided, I thought it not improbable that I ſhould find him ſome where in their neighbourhood; I went thither to ſeek him—I chanced to alight at the very hut he inhabited; I came upon him by ſurpriſe, he could not obſcure himſelf from my view—he reprimanded my zeal, but did not command me to leave him. I ſaw the whole danger of his ſituation—I ſaw too it would be impoſſible to remove him from it, until he had learnt intelligence of the counteſs—in hopes to procure it for him, I went in diſguiſe to the caſtle, I aſked for her woman by the name of Mademoiſelle Marton, pretending that my buſineſs was to deliver a meſſage from her father: ſhe came to me—her ſurpriſe was ſo great, that I feared ſhe would have cried out—I laid my finger on my lips; ſhe unriddled the ſignal, and leading me to her chamber, we communicated to each other all thoſe particulars of which I have already given you the detail; we agreed that it would be proper to keep the counteſs from having

any

any interview with my maſter, leſt the agitation of ſeeing him might be attended by a premature diſcovery of her ſituation, which hitherto had been concealed from the count's obſervation.

"When the time comes for my lady's delivery," ſaid the prudent Marton, "I have already taken ſuch meaſures as will ſecure the ſecret of her being a mother; but if by any ſhock, or accident, the moment of her pangs ſhould be haſtened, all my preparations will avail nothing, her ſituation muſt be revealed—and ſo dearly does ſhe reſpect her reputation, that the idea of having it tarniſhed, even by ſuſpicion, would be worſe to her a thouſand times than death in its moſt formidable terrors. This I have heard her often declare, therefore it is that I would guard her againſt the ſhock her frame would ſuſtain in again beholding him whom ſhe conſiders as her actual huſband, he who is the only lord of her wiſhes."

"I liſtened to and approved of the precaution ſhe ſo ſtrongly recommended; however, for the peace ſake of both parties, we thought it

it beſt the Counteſs ſhould be informed by Marton of the Marquis's welfare, whilſt I took it upon me to aſſure the Marquis that the Counteſs had not been unfaithful to him with her own conſent—we each acted according to the manner in which we had regulated our plans, leſs by the rule of wiſdom than by the meaſure of compaſſion; for theſe lovers, tranſported by the news we told them, inſtead of trying to avoid an interview, were eternally watching to find an opportunity of converſing freely together.

"One fatal day, when the Count as uſual was purſuing his field ſports, the Marquis ventured into the park, where the Counteſs ſoon joined him—Ah! what a meeting—ſo ſweet, yet ſo bitter—ſo chaſte, yet ſo rapturous—ſo innocent, yet ſo guilty.

"My wife, my adorable wife!" cried your father——

"Ah! ſtop, ſtop," ſaid the Counteſs, panting for breath, "approach me not—Heaven is my witneſs you are as dear to me

as ever—but the hand that belongs to another muſt not be polluted by your touch—that and my heart are ſeparated for ever—depart with the knowledge that one of them you poſſeſs—the other is no longer my own—he who has made himſelf the maſter of it will be ſecure in his honour from the reſpect I owe to my own—O God! O God! why were not my firſt vows conſecrated by thy holy ordinance? Why, why were they not regiſtered in the book of Heaven?"

"All the time ſhe was ſpeaking thus my maſter, proſtrate at her feet, durſt not interrupt her—a ſeraphic dignity drew the curtain of reſpect over the weakneſſes of paſſion, and he gazed on her even with more devotion than fondneſs. During a very long converſation, which for its purity might have paſſed in the preſence of angels, they had conſented to ſeparate for ever—already had they uttered their laſt adieus, when once more turning towards her, he ſaid,

"My claims of huſband are prior to thoſe of the Count, yet I renounce them—

remember

remember it is only for your ſake that I do renounce them, and for my ſake, when you have bleſſed me with the title of father, love the offſpring of him who has ſacrificed ſo much to you."

"Villain! Raſcal! Adulterer! ſtop," cried a tremendous voice iſſuing from a thick plantation — It was the Count, who having heard all that had paſſed, ruſhed from his hiding place — the Marquis drew his ſword—that ſword which once before had nearly diſincumbered the earth of a monſter—but ſeveral domeſtics now came to his reſcue, ſaving him once more from the fury of the Marquis — theſe fellows beat the ſword from his hand, ſurrounded and took him priſoner.

"I would fain ſpare you, my daughter," ſaid the kind monk, "from a repreſentation of the terrible ſcene that followed the capture of your father — Are you content that I ſhould paſs it over?"

"I ſobbed out a negative—I could not have ſpoken a whole ſentence if my life had hung on the experiment—He obliged me to drink a glaſs of water.

"Be it ſo," ſaid he; "let us make an end of this diſtreſſing buſineſs ſince we are entered ſo far upon it; when a ſtream is quite full added waters can bring no increaſe to its ſtores, and the human heart has alſo its banks like thoſe of the rivulet, by which its emotions of joy or ſorrow are confined to certain marks, beyond the bounds of which there is no receptacle for either."

I bowed my aſſent to his charming obſervation—the truth of it was then paſſing in my ſoul—it was filled with agonies to the brim—there was room for no more—I laid my arms on the table—I reſted my face upon them—by not looking at the venerable narrator I fancied the ſeverity of my grief would be ſoftened; and without any more interruptions he finiſhed the remainder of his dreadful hiſtory.

"The

"The Countefs," faid he, "had fallen lifelefs at the feet of her inhuman hufband, in which ftate fhe continued till by orders of the Count fhe had been carried back to the caftle, where the firft reprefentations that greeted the return of fenfes was to find her delicate perfon faftened by a chain of iron to the chair in which they had feated her, with the Marquis immediately before her eyes, ftanding upright between fome boards nailed to the form of his body in the fhape of an open coffin, from which it was impoffible he fhould difengage himfelf or vary his pofture —The wretch who invented thefe tortures ftood before them exulting in the fpectacle of his vengeance,"

"Happy lovers," cried he, "how much are you indebted to the fympathy of a hufband, who not only provides for your gratification the eternal fight of each other, but who has alfo ordered his fteward to regale the groffer fenfe of appetite with fuch food as I have no doubt that the fweetnefs of love will make you both enjoy with extreme relifh."

"The Count diſappeared, and in ſome hours afterwards mouldy bread and ſtale water were ſet before them at a certain diſtance, from whence they might take it if they pleaſed. The perpetrator of their inflictions having in part ſatisfied his revenge, fled from his houſe to wait at another for the news of their diſſolution, which he expected would ſoon happen to crown with glory the whole vaſt ſum of his greater cruelties.

"It is not neceſſary that I ſhould recount what was uttered by theſe ſuffering victims; it is a matter of greater conſequence to relate by what means they were relieved from the excruciating torments of their ſituation.

"The good Marton, who, without being admitted to the preſence of her miſtreſs, was well informed of the horrors that ſurrounded her, conveyed to the Baron full intelligence of his daughter's ſituation, who having relaxed much of his reſentment againſt her ſince her forced marriage, it made him determine to ſet out for the ſeat of his ſon-in-law, waiting only to have the requiſite preparations made

made for his journey. Marton alſo contrived to inform the Marquis's family of the horrible tranſaction, recommending them to ſecrecy in whatever ſtep they might be induced to take for the releaſement of their miſerable relation, which advice they ſtrictly followed.

"All this time I was myſelf a priſoner in the château, but not ſo cruelly treated as my poor maſter; the reaſon of my confinement being merely to prevent me from giving notice to the Marquis's friends of his unjuſt impriſonment.

"The Count, by ſome means or other, heard of the Baron's intended viſit to his caſtle; he therefore immediately returned to it, when entering his wife's apartment, he commanded that her chain ſhould be unlooſed—that the Marquis ſhould be taken from his coffin—*ſhe* conveyed to her bed—*he* ſent to a place known only to the Count, except theſe domeſtics who were the agents of his dark machinations: he afterwards ordered that the Counteſs ſhould be carefully

attended, no pains omitted to restore her constitution, and permitted Marton to officiate at the bed-side of her dejected mistress. These kindnesses were not bestowed by the Count from any motive connected with love or repentance—he hated his wife to desperation—he would have seen her tortured to the latest moment of her existence, but he feared the Baron's displeasure at his severity, till he should have convinced him by the evidence of his own eyes of her actual infidelity.

"Your mother being aware of his intentions, and preferring death to the sight of a rigid father in her present state of dishonour, resolved to risk every thing rather than wait for his arrival under the roof of her husband.—When Marton broke to her that the Baron was informed of her sufferings, and that he would be with her on the morrow,

"Then," replied she, "this day will I leave the château."

"What a design is here! Madame," said Marton trembling—"Do you comprehend the

the thouſand dangers, the million of difficulties that impede your flight?"

"Talk to me not," returned the Counteſs, "of dangers, of difficulties—there are none that can affright me in compariſon with the wrath of my too juſtly offended parent—Aid my eſcape, or I will die by my own hands rather than ſtay here to encounter the looks of my father—Ah! do not expoſe me to his rage—leave me not in the power of a furious huſband—but, dear, kind Marton, ſecond my efforts—go with me—leave me not till I have reached the convent, where I am promiſed ſecret reception—abandon me not before you have ſeen me encloſed in this bleſſed aſylum—where I ſhall paſs my few remaining days unmoleſted, foſtering my infant, loving my friends, and praying for my enemies."

"The tears, the ſadneſs that accompanied theſe expreſſions, who could reſiſt? The affectionate Marton was melted by them to unlimited compliance, and managed the buſineſs ſo adroitly, that an hour before midnight

night they were on the outſide of the château.—Your mother's ſtrength ſeemed to renovate by exertion—ſhe leaned on the arm of her faithful ſervant—they took the road to ———. The Counteſs fled as if her purſuers were all the way in ſight of her—at laſt, fatigued with four hours ſwift walking, or rather running, they entered the foreſt of Ardennes, through ſome part of which their path to the convent led them.—Here it was that, her exhauſted ſtrength utterly failing, ſhe was reduced to lie down at the foot of a tree, where ſhe was ſoon overtaken by the pangs of labour."

Here the monk, the tender-hearted friend of my honourable but devoted parents, rehearſed thoſe parts of my birth and deſertion in the foreſt ſo much in the ſame manner with my beloved Recluſe, that it would only appear to the reader like a ſecond edition of his own expreſſions; thoſe circumſtances only of which I was not pre-informed I ſhall repeat in few words, merely to ſay, that the wicked Count, miſſing his deſtined ſacrifice, followed the ſame track ſhe had taken with

armed

armed attendants; that it was he who firſt arrived in the foreſt: the other party were thoſe belonging to my grandfather, who heard on his arrival at the château of his daughter's elopement, and that the Count, very much enraged, was gone in purſuit of her.—This intelligence, unnaturally as the Baron had acted by this amiable daughter, began to make him feel that he took an intereſt in her ſafety. Without difficulty he found the ſpot where the bloody tragedy was already under rehearſal, of which the laſt ſcene would have been ultimately cloſed, but for his reaching it in time to ſave the intended victims, by aiming a blow at his ſon-in-law which fell only on the beaſt that carried him, but ſerved to ward the ſtroke that would otherwiſe have ended my life, perhaps the life of my mother, whom the Baron afterwards bore away. Hating me even before I ſaw the light, his pity extended no farther, yet Divine Providence kindled in the heart of a ſtranger that charity which a parent refuſed to ſhew me.

Having gone over this part of the hiſtory, I proceed with the continuation of it in the eloquent language of a more able narrator.

"I was

"I was ſtill," ſaid the monk, "impriſoned in the château when the Count returned to it, ſufficiently diſmayed by the ill ſucceſs that attended his excurſion to the foreſt; however, he found his mortifications multiply—as he approached it he ſaw it on all ſides environed, by the father, the relations, the friends, the ſervants, the vaſſals of that family whom he had ſo cruelly injured in the perſon of the Marquis de Ramais, whom, all uniting, came in a body to reſcue him—their numbers, their arms, and the violence of their demands to have him immediately produced, very much intimidated the Count—he was unprepared for a reception ſo formidable—he therefore ordered that the doors ſhould be thrown open, beſeeching them to enter without ceremony, and to ſearch every part of his houſe for the perſon who it was ſuppoſed he had concealed in it, or at leaſt until they had convinced themſelves of their error in admitting the ſuppoſition.

"The beſiegers preſently overran the whole magnificent château—no corner eſcaped their examination, yet no Marquis could be diſcovered—

covered—at length ſome of them came to the cell in which I was ſhut up—not ſo cloſe but that I had gained information from a good-natured domeſtic of every internal tranſaction ſince the firſt day of our captivity—The father of my maſter came at the head of his people, who entered with him into my dungeon; the moment he ſaw me at his feet he aſked for news of his ſon with the energy of woe, with the impatience of tenderneſs tortured by ſuſpenſe——I told him the Marquis was certainly no where concealed in the houſe, and that his enemies alone knew the place to which he had been carried. Upon my giving him this unſatisfactory intelligence, the venerable old man propoſed to the little army of his adherents to kill the Count and burn his château unleſs he made the confeſſion of what had been done to his priſoner, and to what place he had tranſported him — The Count loved his life and his caſtle even better than his vengeance—beſides having greedily glutted it already, he yielded with the leſs reluctance — he named the ſituation of the Marquis's priſon, and afterwards deſired they would

would have the goodneſs to receive his adieus, which they poſitively refuſed, ſaying they would have the honour to continue his gueſt until one of their party had been to verify the truth of his aſſertion — he conſented to the propoſal, becauſe it was not in his power to oppoſe their will — I saw the meſſenger diſpatched to aſcertain the Count's veracity — I followed the directions given me — I arrived at the gloomy habitation where he had ſaid the Marquis was depoſited — there indeed I found the noble youth, but, merciful God! in what a ſtate did I find him — his beard unſhaven — his nails unpared — his ſenſes confuſed — worn to a ſkeleton — and weighed down by the heavy deſpondency of a tortured imagination. He was juſt awakened — he knew me as I drew near his bed — he held out his hand — he ſmiled — but it was the ſmile of deſpair — I knelt by his ſide.

"Take courage, my dear maſter," ſaid I. — The few words I uttered were long in coming, being hindered by ſobs.

"The

"The Countefs," cried he in a languifhing tone, "does fhe yet breathe?—Speak to me of the Countefs."

"Yes, yes," I replied: "but take courage, my honoured lord—you will now have nothing to fear from the Count's malevolence—you will be reftored to your father—you will enjoy all his tendernefs."

"Ah!" returned the Marquis, "Do you talk to me of enjoyments who have only a few moments to live?"

"The feeblenefs of his voice almoft perfuaded me he fpoke too truly, when fuddenly raifing it to a pitch of fury, he raved of the Countefs with much tender incoherence till quite exhaufted—he bade me hide nothing from him that concerned her deftiny.

I told him that fhe was fafe in the hands of her father—that he would treat her kindly.

I have

"I have fears, dreadful fears," ſaid he, "that the change of executioners will only augment her miſeries."

"The idea ſeemed to hurt inſtead of relieving him, and I endeavoured to divert his attention by ſpeaking to him of his father, of his friends whom I had left at the Count's château, watching the motions of his vindictive enemy.

"He did not liſten or even hear what I ſaid, but, ſtarting from a profound reverie, aſked if the Counteſs was yet brought to bed.

"She is," I replied; "and you muſt try to live for the ſake of her infant, who can have no other father but yourſelf—ſhe entirely belongs to you—ſhe has no proviſion except you take charge of it——Live, oh! live, my dear maſter, and do not abandon your child to poverty as well as to diſgrace."

"O God!"

"O God!" cried he, "till this moment death has put on the form of consolation —I have courted its approach—I have called upon it to heal the sorrows of a broken heart—Why, why," added he, tears streaming from his eyes, "why do you divest it of mildness? why clothe it in horrors?—Pray for me—pray that I may live—I would see my child—I would protect its innocence in my bosom—my cares—my caresses—should recompence the injuries I have done its divine mother—the misfortunes I have brought upon itself—But where is this devoted offspring of a guilty father?—bring her to me—let me at least endow her with one poor blessing, though I struggle with death in pronouncing it."

"I assured him I had no doubt but the child was in safety at the Baron's with its mother; at present it would be impossible, I said, to take it from thence; yet if he exerted himself to get the better of his indisposition we would together devise such measures as should not only bring the infant to

his arms, but place it entirely under his own protection.

"I really ſpoke as I believed, for at that time I did not know the barbarous Baron had left you behind them in the foreſt of Ardennes.—He groaned bitterly.

"You flatter your expectations," ſaid he, "if you look forward to my recovery—however, ſomething may yet be done—Go to my reſpectable father—engage him to viſit me—entertain no fears that the ſight of him by increaſing my agitation might ſhorten my exiſtence, for whether he comes or whether he ſtays my death is inevitable; though I ſhall quit life with the leſs reluctance if I can ſpeak to him—if he is preſent to receive my laſt ſighs."

"Oh! what did I not feel in being forced to leave the intereſting ſubject of my cares—to leave him in this deplorable condition—yet the ſolemnity of his command haſtened my departure—it alſo haſtened my ſpeed.

I rode

I rode back to the château with desperate velocity—I declared to the sorrowing father the state in which I had seen his only, his beloved son, yet soothed him with hopes that still he might recover—if I had not done so, no meeting in this world would ever have taken place between them. These false hopes saved the good old man from instant annihilation—it even gave him strength to return with me; I conducted him to the marquis, and saw with admiration the wonderful command he imposed on his passions, that he might not augment the pangs of his son by a display of his own acute sufferings.

"My master, from motives equally considerate, robed his face in a similar veil of smiling dissimulation, by which mutual caution this dreadful interview lost many of its terrors.—They had a very long conversation which I did not witness; but on the same night, or rather towards morning, when the despairing parent, overcome by the solicitations of his son, consented to lie down in the room next to that occupied by my mas-

ter. He beckoned me near him—he ſpoke to me—his voice ſo feeble, his tone ſo muffled, as made it difficult perfectly to underſtand what he uttered.

"I collected more from his action than his expreſſions—I underſtood by them that his father had conſented to adopt you—that this promiſe had calmed his tranſports, and enabled him to expect his diſſolutton with tranquillity—one of my arms ſupported his ſinking frame, the other hand was graſped in his—he half pronounced the name of the counteſs, and expired on my boſom."

Here followed a pauſe——not of ſtillneſs. Gueſs, O Reader! how it was filled up.

"Extreme age," ſaid the monk, as ſoon as he was able to re-aſſume his diſcourſe, and we were in a condition to liſten; "extreme age is not a ſeaſon for contention; your grandfather made no reſiſtance, but yielded to the ſhock of nature—he never again roſe from the bed on which he had laid himſelf down, yet he lived long enough to ſend me on a

meſſage

meſſage to the baron, demanding you at his hands as his grand-daughter, and the heireſs of his fortunes. I was not admitted to the preſence of the baron, but he bade me tell my employer, the child whom he meant to endow with his riches, who had diſgraced the houſe of De Preſle, and pulled down ruin on that of De Ramais, might be found in the entrails of wolves and tygers, if he would give himſelf the trouble to hunt after them in the foreſt of Ardennes.

"Before I quitted the caſtle of this more than ſavage monſter, one of the baron's domeſtics confirmed the horrible intelligence: he was an honeſt man, though in the ſervice of a bad maſter—he was alſo my friend, and through him I made an effort to ſpeak with the counteſs, who ſent me word there was nothing in the world ſhe ſo much deſired as to ſee me, but muſt wait a more favourable opportunity, her own poor Marton being diſmiſſed, whoſe place was filled by a ſuſpicious fury that watched the leaſt of her motions.

"I then inquired of the man what ſort of uſage the counteſs received from her father.

"When any body is preſent," ſaid he, "ſhe is treated kindly; but when they are alone, I know he behaves to her very cruelly."

"With no better intelligence I haſtened back to your grandfather, who ſeemed only to linger on the borders of life, to hear that he ſhould meet you in another and better world; he did not grieve for your death; but had I told him the barbarity that was ſuppoſed to have effected it, ſuch tidings would probably have diſcompoſed the unruffled tranquillity with which he glided into eternity.

"Having cloſed his eyes, I fancied I had now but one duty left me to perform on earth—it was penitence for the offences of my paſſed life; I therefore retired to France, and became a religious—but prior to taking leave of my country, I returned to the baron's caſtle, hoping to get one laſt ſight of the counteſs—ſhe was not there; I was made to

believe

believe that ſhe had gone back to her huſband.

"I could not give this report credit; however, I followed it, concealing myſelf near the count's château, in the very houſe where once before my dear maſter was unluckily ſheltered. I watched ſo diligently, that if ſhe had been there I muſt have diſcovered her—day and night I ſtationed myſelf within ſight of the doors, ſo that none could come in or go out without my ſeeing them; at laſt the whole family took their departure from the château; I examined them one by one—alas! no counteſs was amongſt them; and ſince that time I have never heard what became of her, nor ſhould I have known that her excellent daughter had eſcaped death in the foreſt of Ardennes, but for a religious perſecution that made me quit France, and take refuge in Dunkirk, where I received the firſt impreſſion that the young lady, whoſe adventures at that time made ſo great a noiſe, was the intereſting child of my departed friend; the ſtrong reſemblance of whoſe countenance to that of the marquis

had long before engaged much of my melancholy attention—your ſex, your age, your being nouriſhed by the Recluſe, all theſe circumſtances, when diſcovered, convinced me as fully that you could be no other than the daughter of the counteſs, as if I myſelf had taken you from your birth—as if we had never been ſeparated. In conſequence of this conviction I followed you to Italy, where I was detained by a long fit of ſickneſs—I have ſince been employed on a ſecret negociation, which of neceſſity will detain me at Amſterdam."

"Ah!" cried I, "you cannot then go with me in purſuit of my perſecuted mother."

"It is impoſſible," he replied, "unleſs you give up more time in waiting for me than will agree with your impatience to find her—take my bleſſing with you, and if you are ever fortunate enough to recover this inestimable parent, forget not to ſend me the happy information."

I promiſed

I promiſed him he ſhould never have cauſe to accuſe me of ingratitude.

From this time I became more eager than ever to continue my purſuit—I bade a thouſand tender adieus to the monk and Donna Medina Lentilla, who ſaw me depart with tears in their eyes, and prayed for the ſucceſs of my enterpriſe.

I laid down in my plan of travels to viſit every town in Flanders, as well as thoſe of Brabant, having learnt that I was actually born in that province.

I had been but a few hours at Bruſſelles before I was recognized by many of my old acquaintances; and at one of their houſes I met with a very charming woman, who not only engaged my attention, but ſeized violently on my affections, inſomuch that my eyes were rivetted on her face, and I thought every body impertinent who, by taking a ſhare in the converſation, prevented her from engroſſing the whole of it.

This

This lady's name was Madame de Brige; ſhe ſeemed quickly advancing towards the vale of life; yet that ſmall knowledge I poſſeſs in the ſcience of phyſiognomy told me ſorrow, rather than time, had faded her charms on the journey—complacent meekneſs and unreſiſting ſoftneſs were blended with dignity the moſt impreſſive—her voice ſpoke to the ſoul—and the grandeur of her expreſſions would have been too exalted to pleaſe in general ſociety, but for the ſweet deportment of humility with which ſhe uttered them.

Such was Madame de Brige, who ſtruck by the ſuddenneſs of my attachment, returned it with more than intereſt—in ſhort, from our firſt interview we were never ſatisfied aſunder, or ever happy but when together.

The few perſons whom ſhe admitted to her houſe before our intimacy commenced were now augmented to numbers; nothing but my eaſe could have made her invade upon her own privileged ſolitude—ſhe ſaw my ſpirits were broken down—ſhe thought a diverſity

of

of objects would assist in building them up; she therefore courted the herds of company, which before she had shunned, without laying a tax on my gratitude, by letting me know the greatness of the sacrifice she offered to my accommodation.

I am now going to surprise the Reader with an event he cannot expect—it was thus that it unpremeditately happened: on a certain day, upon which my friend held an assembly, amongst many less interesting subjects, one of the lady's began speaking of the misfortunes that had fallen on the house of Barneveldt—a name so dear covered my face with deadly paleness. I felt the blood rush back to my heart in icy torrents; what then must have become of me, if the name only had such an effect on my feelings, when the same person said that Monsieur de Barneveldt, who had resided so many years in Spain, was then living at the Hague, and in high favour with the States General.

I took courage to speak.—I said in a hesitating tone, "Ah, Madame! you are misinformed;

formed; the perſon to whom you allude has been dead many months."

"Not at all," replied ſhe, a little angry at being contradicted; "I give you my honour, the De Barneveldt, who retired to Spain, is now living: nay, you may believe what I tell you; obſerving, that I ſtill looked incredulous—a hundred people have very lately ſeen him at the Hague. I have had my intelligence from thoſe who have ſpoken with him, ſo there can be no doubt about the matter—moreover they ſay, notwithſtanding all his fine proſpects, he is extremely melancholy for the loſs of a young lady to whom he was contracted."

At an aſſertion ſo poſitive my heart beat double; it was the alarm of unregulated joy: I ſhould have fainted under its too ſudden aſſault, if I had not as ſuddenly retreated from the company, and fled to my own houſe, where I endeavoured to correct my extravagant agitation, by recalling to my imagination all the impoſſibilities that could exclude from my mind thoſe hopes, beginning to find

a too

a too ready admittance—a ſtate of ſuſpenſe is the torture of ſenſibility.

I ſent off an expreſs to the Hague to bring me more certain intelligence. I waited with impatience the return of my *courier*. I hoped—I feared—my ſoul could find no tranquillity but near Madame de Brige. I made her the confidante of my affection for De Barneveldt—of his love for me—of our mutual engagement: ſhe heard—ſhe pitied—ſhe ſoothed me—ſhe took apart in my impatience—ſhe every day aired with me on the road between Bruſſelles and the Hague, to anticipate the moment that ſhould reſtore me to a ſtate of certainty.

On the fifth day, full of expectation, we extended our ſight as far as it would go to catch the firſt glimpſe of my *courier's* approach, where I ſaw a cavalier, followed by ſeveral ſervants, at the turn of the road coming on full ſpeed towards us. My heart told me it was Monſieur de Barneveldt—my eyes confirmed the truth of its language; the next moment they cloſed in a delirium of

ecſtaſy,

ecſtaſy, and I do not know what became of my ſenſes, till I found them again in the arms of my lover, who having no compoſure of his own, was totally diſqualified to return what he had taken from me. We gazed—we wept—we ſighed—but for a long time neither he nor I could utter a ſyllable.

As ſoon as we began to tranquillize, he aſked, in a low voice, if Madame de Brige was my mother; at the ſame inſtant he ſaluted, and apologized to her for the incoherence of his conduct, laying the whole charge of it to my account.

I anſwered his queſtion, by ſaying it was not my good fortune to call Madame de Brige my mother; but added, that I hoped ſoon to hear news of my family.

He preſſed my hand to his heart, and replied ſoftly, "What ſignifies your family—you are to me all the treaſures of the univerſe compriſed in one."

Madame

Madame de Brige, who had wept incessantly during the whole of our tender interview, now took a share in our conversation. As we were returning in her carriage to Brusselles, she insisted on his supping with her that evening, to which he readily assented, and, before we separated, he had the goodness to satisfy our curiosity as to the means by which he had escaped with life after being wounded by the robbers, after my own people, at least those I hired for the occasion, supposed they had seen his body received into the consecrated earth of a neighbouring church.

"The corpse, they imagined to be mine," said he, "was that of a more unfortunate traveller than myself, whom I saw butchered before my eyes. The villains having stripped me, went away in pursuit of fresh plunder, little concerning themselves whether I was dead or living; soon after some peasants passed by, who, being accustomed to such sort of bloody spectacles, stopped to examine the dead bodies one by one; they perceived some warmth remaining in me, and humanely

bore

bore me on their ſhoulders to the next village. The ſurgeon, who dreſſed the two wounds I had received by a piſtol ſhot, one in the ſhoulder, the other in the loins, entertained hopes which thoſe who attended me were not quite ſo ready to admit, it being many days before I gave any other ſigns of life except to call on your loved name in phrenzical exclamations; at laſt the fever abated by little and little—I gained ſtrength, my memory returned—I ſent for the curé of the place—he came to me—I recounted my misfortunes—I prayed he would ſend to Cadiz, and inform himſelf if you were yet arrived in that town. He did what I required, but to no effect; you had not been ſeen or heard of at Cadiz—my mind grew more diſcompoſed—my fever returned—my wounds inflamed, and, for a long time, I lay at the gates of death. After a tedious proceſs theſe unfavourable ſymptoms abated, my recovery became aſtoniſhingly rapid conſidering how ſtrongly it was oppoſed by the thouſand unſpeakable agitations of my mind. I ſent to Holland for remittance, and, by the time my demands were anſwered, I was able

to mount my horſe, when, acquitting myſelf of the obligations I owed to all who had any ſhare in my preſervation, I purſued my way to Cadiz, where I could get no intelligence of your route. I therefore embarked with a heavy heart for that country from whence I had ſo long been baniſhed. I was much better received at the Hague than I expected; but finding you were not arrived there, how indifferent was my heart to the joys of an honourable reception — it had loſt its deareſt object, which loſs it never ceaſed to lament until the arrival of your *courier* opened once more to my view the glorious proſpect which I thought had been cloſed for ever."

I ſhall not lengthen the little that yet remains of my memoirs, by telling you what I felt on hearing De Barneveldt relate his horrible adventures, or what I ſaid to him when he had finiſhed them. After he bade us a good night, I ſtaid a little behind to indulge myſelf in the pleaſure of talking about him to Madame de Brige, who ſeemed to

have divided her heart between us. When we had ran over the whole catalogue of his praiſes, fearful of intruding on the repoſe of my friend, I aroſe to go to my lodgings, but catching hold of my friend ——

"Do not go! — do not leave me!" — ſhe cried; "from this hour accept the apartment I have prepared for you, and be to me a daughter!"

Her eyes, ſwimming in tears, were fixed on my face as ſhe ſpoke — they deluged her cheeks — her tongue faltered as ſhe announced the word daughter.

"Dereſt Madame," ſaid I, caſting my arms about her neck, "what is it that I learn from this expreſſive ſorrow? — Alas! had you once a daughter? — is that daughter no more? or has the imprudence of her conduct made you thus wretched?"

"Ah!" replied Madame de Brige, preſſing me cloſer to her boſom, "my daughter never diſgraced her mother! — It is I who have

have disgraced my daughter—I gave her an illegitimate birth, but she does not live to reproach me—I bore her in a forest—I left her a prey to the devouring beast of-----."

"Tell me! tell me!" cried I, madly interrupting her, "for the love of God tell me that you are the Countess de Reucour?"

"Yes, I am that unfortunate woman!"

"Then!" cried I, falling at her feet, and embracing her knees, "then you are, indeed, my own dear, my own adorable mother!—I am your child, I am the child of your beloved Marquis de Ramais!"

Let us drop a curtain over the rest of this scene—Joy did not kill my mother!

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

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Before De Barneveldt joined us the next morning, I had ran over very event of my life with that ſort of joyful confuſion which people, only rationally happy, would find very incoherent; yet to my reſpectable parent it was perfect eloquence, becauſe her heart underſtood the language of mine, nor were her expreſſions in much greater order than my own. All that the reader does not yet know will be explained in few words.

When the good Monk could no where find my mother, either at the Baron's caſtle, or the Count's château, it was by the commands of the former that ſhe had privately concealed herſelf in a convent, which ſhe never quitted until her huſband and father were both dead; but before that time the Baron had repented of his cruelty to ſo amiable a daughter, leaving her, at his deceaſe, ſole heireſs to more than a princely fortune. So rich a ſucceſſion muſt have made her known, had ſhe continued any longer in the convent; ſhe rather choſe to live retired at Bruſſelles under a fictitious character.

"I have,"

"I have," said she, "reserved all the riches of my father, and happily I have reserved them for you, my beloved daughter."

I have only now to add, that, in six days after this great discovery, instead of one child, my tender mother had two children, and, as long as she lived, I had never any other contest with my Dear Barneveldt than which of us should have the greatest portion of happiness, in adoring her, in obeying her, and in serving her!

THE END.

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FROM THE

DEATH OF LOUIS THE FOURTEENTH

TO THE

PEACE OF VERSAILLES IN 1783.

WRITTEN IN FRENCH BY

ANTOINE ETIENNE NICOLAS DES ODOARDS FENTIN,

*VICAR GENERAL OF EMBRUN.*

IN EIGHT VOLUMES, OCTAVO.

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MAGIS AMICA VERITAS.

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1789.

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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vol. I. | from the Year | 1715 to 1723, | a Period of | 8 Years. |
| — II. | ditto | 1723 to 1735, | ditto | 12 |
| — III. | ditto | 1735 to 1744, | ditto | 9 |
| — IV. | ditto | 1744 to 1753, | ditto | 9 |
| — V. | ditto | 1753 to 1760, | ditto | 7 |
| — VI. | ditto | 1760 to 1769, | ditto | 9 |
| — VII. | ditto | 1769 to 1778, | ditto | 9 |
| — VIII. | ditto | 1778 to 1783, | ditto | 5 |
| | | | A Period of | 68 Years. |

*Approbation of the Work translated from the French.*

"I have read, by order of Monseigneur Le Garde des "Sceaux, a manuscript, entitled The History of France, "from the Death of Louis XIV. to the Peace of Ver-"sailles, 1783, by M. the Abbé A. E. N. des Odoards "Fentin, Vicar General of Embrun. This work, the "fruit of profound research among the political and ec-"clesiastic monuments of the present age, appears to me "illustrated by the most sound criticism and refined taste. "Every object is presented with that interest which truth "alone can inspire: and I believe true patriotic readers "will be gratified by the judicious author having fixed "their ideas on a multitude of actions which they have "themselves witnessed; but from which, different pas-"sions, and various prejudices, have almost diverted their "attention. I presume to suppose that this interesting pro-"duction will, on the most just pretensions, obtain for "him the gratitude and esteem of his cotemporaries, with "a still more favorable reception from the succeeding "generations." Given at Paris, the 13th of June, 1788.

(Signed) DOURDET, Professeur Royal.